

HOW DOES INTEGRATED REPORTING CHANGE SUSTAINABILITY COMMUNICATIONS?

A study comparing companies' sustainability communications before and after integrated reporting

Corporate Communication

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Objective of the study

The objective was to study how companies communicate sustainability before and after the adoption of integrated reporting. Integrated reporting means publishing a concise report (integrated report) annually about how a company creates value to its stakeholders. It should acknowledge both financial and non-financial aspects, and it is sometimes considered as a combination of the annual report and the sustainability report. Integrated reporting should lead to integrated thinking, which in practice means that also non-financial aspects (social and environmental sustainability) are taken into consideration in decision-making and strategy.

Methodology

The research was carried out as a qualitative content analysis. The data was gathered from CEOs and Chairmen's messages in seven European companies' corporate reports (annual, sustainability and integrated reports) from 2010 and 2015, i.e. from the time before and after they were engaged in integrated reporting. Maximum variation sampling strategy was used in the selection of data, which resulted in two kinds of findings: detailed descriptions of each seven case, and shared patterns that lead to the key findings.

Findings and conclusions

Four key findings were discovered in the study. First, in terms of sustainability communications, the companies' integrated reports resembled a great deal the previous annual reports, and not the sustainability reports. Second, the companies used the fit tactic more in their sustainability communications after integrated reporting. Third, the companies provided more quantitative information about financial than non-financial topics. Lastly, all companies did not show integrated thinking in their communications after integrated reporting. These findings indicate that integrated reporting does not drastically change a company's sustainability communications, and all companies do not go through the same changes. In addition, integrated reporting does not automatically lead to integrated thinking. The study paves way for further research in the field.

Keywords corporate communication, integrated reporting, sustainability communications, sustainability

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Tutkielman tavoitteet

Tutkielman tavoitteena on tutkia, kuinka yritykset viestivät vastuullisuudesta ennen ja jälkeen integroidun raportoinnin. Integroitu raportointi tarkoittaa tiiviin vuosittaisen raportin julkaisua, jossa yritys kertoo kuinka se luo arvoa sidosryhmilleen. Raportissa tulee ottaa huomioon myös muut kuin taloudelliset asiat, ja raportti joskus ajatellaankin vuosikertomuksen ja vastuullisuusraportin yhdistelmänä. Integroidun raportoinnin pitäisi johtaa integroituun ajatteluun, mikä käytännössä tarkoittaa, että myös ei-taloudelliset asiat (sosiaalinen vastuu ja ympäristövastuu) otetaan huomioon päätöksenteossa ja strategiassa.

Tutkimusmenetelmät

Tutkimus suoritettiin kvalitatiivisena sisältöanalyysinä. Tutkimuskohteena oli toimistujohtajan ja hallituksen puheenjohtajan viestit seitsemän eurooppalaisen yrityksen raporteissa (vuosi-, vastuullisuus- ja integroitu raportti) vuosilta 2010 ja 2015, eli ennen ja jälkeen integroidun raportoinnin aloittamisen. Otanta suoritettiin maksimivariaatiostrategialla, jolla saatiin kahdenlaisia löydöksiä: yksityiskohtaiset kuvaukset kaikista seitsemästä tapauksesta, sekä tapausten läpileikkaavia piirteitä, joiden perusteella löydökset saatiin.

Löydökset ja johtopäätökset

Tutkimuksesta saatiin neljä löydöstä. Ensimmäiseksi, vastuullisuusviestinnän näkökulmasta integroidut raportit muistuttivat hyvin paljon enemmän aiempia vuosiraportteja kuin vastuullisuusraportteja. Toiseksi, yritykset käyttivät corporate fit–vastuullisuusviestintätaktiikkaa enemmän integroidun raportoinnin jälkeen. Kolmanneksi, yritykset antoivat enemmän kvantitatiivista tietoa taloudellisista kuin ei-taloudellisista aiheista ennen ja jälkeen integroidun raportoinnin. Viimeiseksi, kaikki yritykset eivät osoittaneet integroitua ajattelua viestinnässään integroidun raportoinnin jälkeen. Löydökset osoittavat, ettei integroitu raportointi muuta vastuullisuusviestintää dramaattisesti, eikä joka yrityksellä samalla tavalla. Integroitu raportointi ei myöskään aina johda integroituun ajatteluun. Tämä tutkimus luo hyvän pohjan tuleville tutkimuksille samasta aiheesta.

Avainsanat yritysviestintä, integroitu raportointi, vastuullisuusviestintä, vastuullisuus

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ABBREVIATIONS

CSR	corporate social responsibility
the IIRC	the International Integrated Reporting Council
<IR>	integrated reporting framework, created by the IIRC
KPI	key performance indicator
NGO	non-governmental organization

1 Introduction

The increasing interest in sustainable investing (e.g. Hockerts & Moir, 2004) has encouraged companies to take a firmer approach to operating in a sustainable manner, meaning to take into consideration the social and environmental responsibility of the company even more than before. Operating in a sustainable manner can also be a strategic choice of the company, and not just a response to stakeholder pressure, as acting sustainably can bring many financial and non-financial benefits for the company (Carroll & Shabana, 2010).

In order to gain all the benefits of operating sustainably, companies need to be able to communicate their sustainability to their stakeholders (Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2010). For long, sustainability reporting has been the number one channel to communicate a company's sustainability. In fact, in 2015, 92 percent of the largest 500 companies published a sustainability report (KPMG, 2015, p. 30). However, with the increased interest from investors towards sustainability (e.g. Hockerts & Moir, 2004), new ways to communicate sustainability to the investors are needed. Recently, there has been increasing interest in a new reporting format that integrates the sustainability information with other relevant information (strategic, financial) that is often presented in the company's annual report. This reporting style is called integrated reporting.

Integrated reporting is voluntary, with the exception of a few countries. Due to this, no universal reporting guidelines have existed, until 2013, when the International Integrated Reporting Council (the IIRC) created the Integrated Reporting (<IR>) framework. The purpose of the <IR> framework is to unify the practices around integrated reporting by guiding companies on how to create the integrated report. The idea of integrated reporting is to help the companies to provide a holistic overview to their investors about how they create value. When discussing integrated reporting in this paper, the term refers to integrated reporting done in accordance with this <IR> framework. Integrated reporting seems to be here to stay, as literature shows that it brings many benefits, and that businesses have responded to it well (Burke & Clark, 2016). This shows that the topic is current and of interest for both practitioners and academia.

There is more to the <IR> framework's integrated reporting than just the actual report itself. The goal is to encourage integrated thinking within the organizations, which further enables the company to understand its value creation over the short, long and medium term (the IIRC, 2013). Integrated thinking aims at increasing collaboration within the organization as well as emphasizing consideration for the financial and non-financial aspects when making decisions in the organization (the IIRC, 2013). One way to understand integrated thinking is as the implementation of sustainability into a company's strategy (Accounting for Sustainability, n.d.). Ideally, a company's communications should "harness" the company's strategy (Cornelissen, 2014, p. 5). Thus, assuming integrated thinking happens, it should be reflected on the company's sustainability communications, for example by stating how they have integrated sustainability into their decision-making processes.

As discussed, integrated reporting is strongly related to communicating sustainability. Sustainability, CSR and sustainability communications have received a great deal of scholarly attention for decades. The terms sustainability and CSR are often used interchangeably in literature. The very first definitions for CSR derive from Carroll, (1979), and many have followed since. Different sustainability and CSR communication strategies have been formed (e.g. Morsing & Schultz, 2006; Du et al. 2010), and their use has been studied in companies' sustainability communications (e.g. Herremans, Nazari and Mahmoudian, 2016). Sustainability reports in particular have also been studied largely. The naming conventions (Gatti & Seele, 2014), different reporting standards (Chersan, 2016), as well as the reasons behind publishing or not publishing sustainability reports (Searcy & Buslovich, 2014; Stubbs, Higgins & Milne, 2013) have received plenty of scholarly attention.

A growing interest in integrated reporting has emerged also from academia, although as of yet, integrated reporting remains a rather under researched topic, and more research has been called for on many occasions (e.g. Adams, 2014; Dumay, Bernardi, Guthrie, & Demartini, 2016). Literature suggests that integrated reporting is here to stay, and that companies should now start adopting the integrated reporting framework (Burke & Clark, 2016; Lodhia, 2015). This means that also scholars should pose more attention to studying the phenomenon.

As one of the benefits of integrated reporting is improved external relations (Burke & Clark, 2016), it also comes as no surprise that the integrated report itself is often considered as a communications tool for the company (e.g. Lodhia, 2015; Stacchezzini, Melloni & Lai, 2016). However, its use as a communication tool has not been thoroughly examined, and it has been suggested that future research should study the contents of integrated reports even more (Sierra-García, Zorio-Grima & García-Benau, 2015; Stacchezzini et al. 2016).

The changes integrated reporting brings to companies' communications have been studied to some extent. Studies show that with integrated reporting, the number of corporate reports published decreases (Havlová, 2015). Literature suggests that integrated reporting enhances communicating the corporate story (Lodhia, 2015). However, according to Stacchezzini et al. (2016), companies who do integrated reporting communicate only a little quantitative and forward-looking information about their sustainability management. This suggests that despite integrated reporting enabling better storytelling, the sustainability information provided might not increase much. However, Stacchezzini et al. (2016) studied only integrated reports, not annual or sustainability reports published before integrated reporting. Thus, their study did not address how companies' sustainability communications have changed with integrated reporting. In fact, hardly any research addresses how companies' sustainability communications have changed before and after adopting the integrated reporting style.

In addition, in spite of the increasing popularity of integrated reporting, there have been few studies focusing on its main outcome: integrated thinking. Oliver, Vesty and Brooks (2016) studied how integrated thinking is observed in practice. However, their research studied only integrated thinking as appears in verbal communication by conducting interviews with executives. At present, there is no research on how integrated thinking can be seen in companies' written sustainability communications.

This study aims to fill the two research gaps described above: how integrated reporting changes sustainability communications, and how integrated thinking can be seen in sustainability communications after adoption of integrated reporting. This is done by

studying the nature and extent of sustainability messages in companies' external communications before and after the adoption of integrated reporting. Studying external communications to see how sustainability is embedded in them can also reveal how well integrated thinking has been implemented in these companies.

To provide a thorough basis for the research, this paper relies heavily on four fields of theory: stakeholder management, sustainability and CSR, sustainability and CSR communication, and integrated reporting. It should be noted that this thesis has been conducted as a commission for a Finnish publicly listed company. Next, the research objectives and research questions are described in more detail.

1.1 Research objectives and questions

As mentioned above, the aim of this study is to explore how integrated reporting, done in accordance with the IIRC's integrated reporting framework, changes a company's sustainability communications. This will be explored by comparing the same companies' external communications material before and after they adopted integrated reporting. The focus is on observing the nature and extent of sustainability messages visible in the corporate reports before and after integrated reporting. In addition, based on this, it can be observed whether the companies have been successful in implementing sustainability into their strategy, as that is the goal of integrated thinking, which integrated reporting promotes.

Two research questions have been formulated based on the research objectives mentioned above:

RQ1. How do companies communicate sustainability in their corporate reports before and after the adoption of integrated reporting?

RQ2. How do companies communicate integrated thinking in their corporate reports after the adoption of integrated reporting?

1.2 Thesis structure

This research paper is divided into six chapters. In this Chapter 1, a general introduction into the research topic has been given. In addition, the objectives for the study and the research questions have been introduced.

Next, this thesis proceeds with Chapter 2, where the most relevant literature related to the research phenomenon is discussed. The concept of strategic stakeholder management is explored by presenting two relevant models, the strategic stakeholder management model and the stakeholder salience model. The variety of definitions for sustainability are discussed, as well as how a company can communicate their sustainability initiatives and activities, with special attention paid to a traditional communication tool, the annual sustainability report. Integrated reporting and integrated thinking are presented as well. The chapter concludes with the theoretical framework, which is based on the literature review.

The research design and methods for data collection and analysis used in this study are introduced in Chapter 3. This study uses a qualitative content analysis approach. The research material consists of CEOs and Chairmen's messages in corporate reports from two different points in time. In Chapter 4, the findings are presented, and in Chapter 5, they are discussed in relation to existing literature. Research summary, practical implications, limitations of the study, as well as suggestions for further research are finally presented in Chapter 6, which concludes this thesis.

2 Literature review

This chapter discusses literature relevant for the thesis in order to outline the theoretical framework for the study. As mentioned, this paper studies the phenomenon of integrated reporting from a sustainability communication viewpoint. Thus, this paper positions integrated reporting under sustainability communication, which in this paper is considered as the link between strategic stakeholder management and sustainability.

The chapter begins by discussing stakeholder management. Following this, sustainability is defined by discussing existing academic and practical definitions, finally giving a definition for the concept to be used in this paper. After this, communicating sustainability is discussed with emphasis on sustainability communication strategies and sustainability reporting. This is followed by a thorough discussion on the concept of integrated reporting, where integrated thinking is also presented. Finally, the chapter ends by outlining the theoretical framework used in this study.

2.1 Stakeholder management

Identifying the key stakeholders and understanding their needs and expectations is the starting point for any communication, especially sustainability communication. Thus, it seems appropriate that strategic stakeholder management is the starting point for this literature review as well.

Stakeholders are a key part of any organization's activities, and an organization needs to know how to identify these stakeholders, how to rank their importance, and how to communicate with them. To understand these things, various theories for stakeholder management have been developed. Two theories are presented next: the stakeholder model of strategic management, which helps to understand the relationship between a company and its stakeholders, and the stakeholder salience model, which helps to understand the level of importance of different stakeholders for a company.

Companies are not responsible only to their investors, but also to their other stakeholders, such as governments, political groups, suppliers, customers, trade associations, employees,

and communities (Cornelissen, 2014, pp. 42-43). Thus, organizations cannot act alone in their business: in order to be allowed to exist, the organization needs to act according to the rules set by the society, and participate in dialogue with the stakeholders and society members. (Cornelissen, 2014, p. 241.) The stakeholder model of strategic management acknowledges this. It recognizes that a company cannot operate individually of its stakeholders, but that stakeholders and the company have a relationship built on interdependency (Cornelissen, 2014, p. 43). The stakeholder model was presented by Donaldson and Preston (1995). They developed stakeholder theory from an input-output model to a stakeholder model. In the input-output model, investors, employees and suppliers give input to the company and the company gives output to its customers, whereas in the stakeholder model all stakeholders: governments, investors, political groups, customers, communities, employees, trade associations and suppliers, have a two-way relationship with the company (Donaldson & Preston, 1995, pp. 67-69). The stakeholder model is presented in Figure 1.

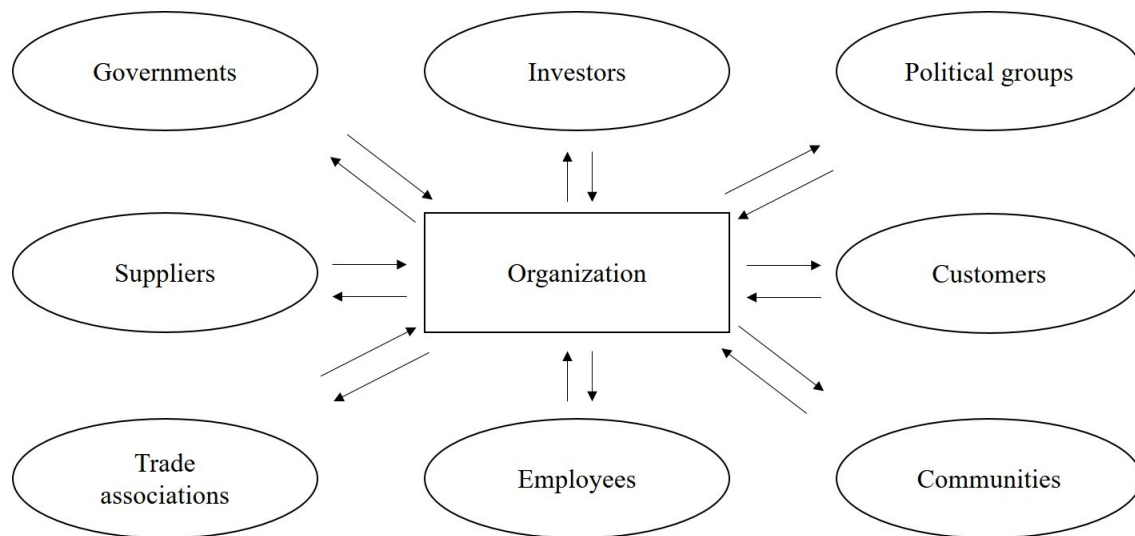


Figure 1: Stakeholder model of strategic management (Donaldson & Preston, 1995, p. 69)

As Figure 1 shows, all stakeholders are presented as equal in size. Despite this, an organization must analyze and decide which stakeholders are more important for the success of its operations than others. However, it is not possible to identify the level of importance

for each stakeholder with the stakeholder model of strategic management; thus, other models are needed for that.

The stakeholder salience model is one the most common stakeholder mapping models used to identify the key stakeholders. The model was presented by Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997). The model is depicted in Figure 2.

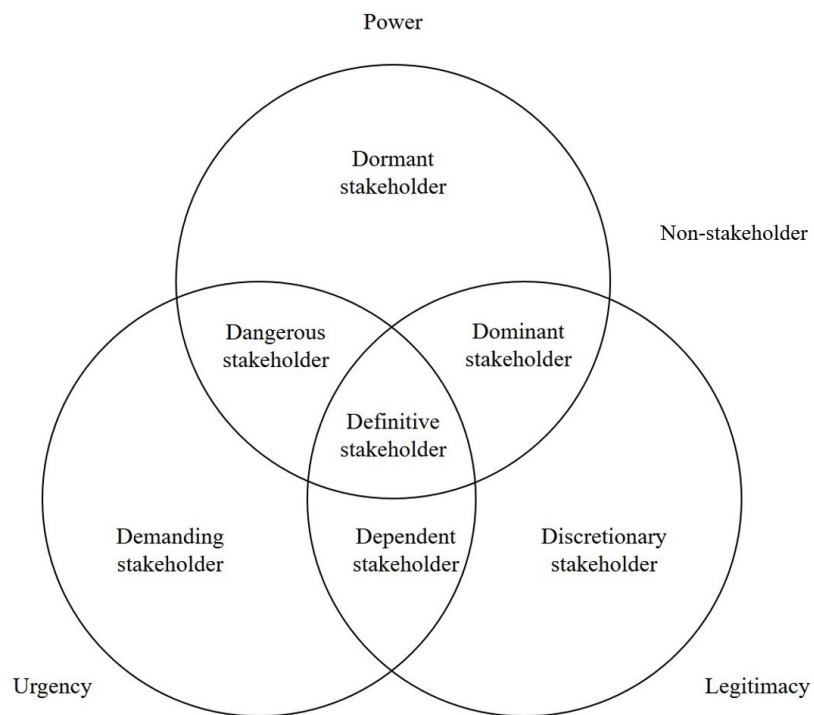


Figure 2: The stakeholder salience model (Mitchell et al., 1997, p. 874)

As Figure 2 shows, there are three attributes in the model: power, legitimacy and urgency. Mitchell et al. (1997, p. 865) define power so that the stakeholder "...has or can gain access to coercive, utilitarian, or normative means, to impose its will in the relationship", however they also note that power is not a constant state, so the level of power may change over time. Mitchell et al. (1997, p. 866) admit a linkage between power and legitimacy, however pointing out that a stakeholder can have power without legitimacy and vice versa. As a definition for legitimacy the authors use the definition by Suchman (1995, p. 574 as cited in Mitchell et al., 1997, p. 866): "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an

entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions". Mitchell et al. (1997, p. 867) define urgency so that it can exist "...only when two conditions are met: (1) when a relationship or claim is of a time-sensitive nature and (2) when that relationship or claim is important or critical to the stakeholder". The stakeholders that are located in the inner circle of the model are considered the most important ones (definitive stakeholders), as they possess all three attributes. The stakeholders that possess two attributes can possess a threat to the organization (dangerous or dominant stakeholders) or be dependent of the organization due to lack of power (dependent stakeholder). The stakeholders with only one attribute (dormant, discretionary or demanding stakeholders) are not the first priority to the organization as they are missing two of the three attributes. The position of the expectant or latent stakeholders might change if they gain the missing attributes, so they should be kept on the stakeholder map. Those who possess none of the three attributes are not stakeholders. (Mitchell et al., 1997, pp. 873-878.)

As mentioned, the position of each stakeholder may change, so an organization should do stakeholder mapping on a regular basis to keep up-to-date with potential developments. As sustainability issues have gained more publicity in the recent years, it might raise the power status of for example an environmental organization from demanding or dependent to dangerous or even definitive. As an example of this works Greenpeace's campaign to stop Lego from cooperating with Shell. As Greenpeace gained publicity, it gained power over Lego, and Lego had to end its partnership with Shell (e.g. Vaughan, 2014). This example shows how the status of stakeholders can change in time, and that it is important to keep the stakeholder salience map updated constantly to avoid surprises.

As has been described above, companies have many stakeholders to whom they are accountable and with whom they need to communicate. As mentioned, the key step in communicating anything, also sustainability, is to start from identifying the stakeholders and their expectations. After this, the company can decide how best to communicate with the stakeholders. Before moving on to sustainability communications, sustainability itself is discussed in the next subchapter.

2.2 Sustainability

As mentioned in the introduction, in practice and in literature, the terms sustainability, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are used interchangeably and as synonyms (e.g. Gatti & Seele, 2014). There are varying opinions about which terminology should be the preferred one. In this paper, the terms CSR and sustainability are both be used when discussing relevant literature; however, the term sustainability will be used in all other situations. It should be noted that sustainability is nowadays more often prevailing in the business world (Gatti & Seele, 2014) as well as in integrated reporting literature cited in this paper (e.g. in Churet & Eccles, 2014; Stacchezzini et al., 2016). However, some other literature discusses the economic, social and environmental aspects of a business with the term CSR (e.g. in Carroll, 1979). Thus, neither of these terms could be eliminated from this paper and both are used, but sustainability is preferred, as integrated reporting is associated more with sustainability than CSR.

Sustainability is an emerging term that is gaining momentum in practice and in literature. The term CSR on the other hand has a long history, as the first mentions in literature about CSR date back to the 1950s (Carroll, 1979, p. 497). However, as mentioned, these terms are used interchangeably. Despite the long history, there does not exist one universally accepted definition for CSR or sustainability, but rather a myriad of different definitions (Marrewijk, 2003; Dahlsrud, 2008; Searcy & Buslovich, 2014).

Archie B. Carroll is one of the most appraised scholars in the field of CSR. Carroll (1979, p. 499) says that social responsibility should include a company's economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities. The discretionary category was later changed to philanthropic (Carroll, 1991, p. 40). Carroll (1979, p. 499) suggests that the responsibilities can be organized by magnitude, with economic responsibilities being the biggest, followed by legal responsibilities and ethical responsibilities, with philanthropic responsibilities having the smallest importance.

This categorization and ranking can be argued to make sense. Economic responsibility is a key driver for listed companies especially, as they receive funding from external stakeholders

to whom they are responsible for their financial performance. Legal responsibilities ought to be followed by nature, as there are severe consequences if they are not followed. Stakeholders expect companies to follow ethical standards as well, and if they are not followed, there may be retaliation from the stakeholders. Philanthropic activities on the other hand can be considered purely voluntary, either done to gain favorable publicity or out of pure desire to do so.

Based on this categorization, Carroll (1979, p. 500) gives a more detailed definition for a company's social responsibility: "The social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time". The last part "at a given point in time" is crucial. The expectations of the society towards a company's social responsibility change and evolve constantly. What was considered as business as usual in the 1980s might not be that in the 2010s. From this, it can be deduced that the concept of sustainability develops over time.

John Elkington is another acclaimed scholar in sustainability. He came up with the triple bottom line concept in the 1990s. The triple bottom line means that in addition to pure economic value, companies also provide environmental and social value from their business. The triple bottom line is often understood as one of the first definitions for sustainability. (Slaper & Hall, 2011, p. 4.) The concept of the triple bottom line gained appraisal and has been widely cited in literature, and adopted by many businesses in their reporting (Elkington, 2010, p. 406).

In addition to Carroll and Elkington, a number of authors have defined CSR and sustainability in their own terms. Dahlsrud (2008) tried to map out the variety of CSR definitions available. He found 37 definitions for CSR, and identified five dimensions of CSR in them: environmental dimension, social dimension, economic dimension, stakeholder dimension and voluntariness dimension (Dahlsrud, 2008). Dahlsrud (2008, p. 6) suggests that the problem with CSR is not the lack of a common definition, but rather to understand "...how CSR is socially constructed in a specific context and how to take this into account when

business strategies are developed”. This implies that each organization should decide internally what the concept of CSR for them means.

Buhăniță (2015) used a similar method as Dahlsrud and derived four dimensions from 29 CSR definitions. The four dimensions were ecological dimension, social dimension, economic dimension, and the way of addressing the stakeholders, i.e. whether stakeholders are described as “stakeholders” in general or as specific groups “employees, investors” (Buhăniță, 2015). The four dimensions are very similar to Dahlsrud’s, with the fifth one, voluntariness, missing. Potential reasons for this can only be guessed. Buhăniță’s study was carried out seven years after Dahlsrud’s, so it could be that the newer definitions no longer mention voluntariness. On the other hand, it could be just that as in qualitative research the author has a big impact in the interpretation of the findings, the second researcher just did not consider voluntariness as a separate dimension. Nonetheless, the dimensions referring to the triple bottom line (economic, environmental and social responsibility) are included in Buhăniță’s findings, which indicates that the core of CSR has remained relatively the same throughout its history.

As can be seen from the different definitions presented above, the aspects of economic, social, and environmental responsibility are included in them all, with voluntariness (or philanthropy) and the stakeholder perspective included in some. This would suggest that despite there not being one universally accepted definition for sustainability, the understanding of what responsibility for non-financial aspects means is however quite universal. This paper uses the triple bottom line concept as a basis for the definition for sustainability and CSR: the economic, social, and environmental responsibilities of a company. This definition was chosen as it summarizes the core of sustainability and as it is commonly used by companies.

Reasons for engaging in sustainability are manifold. Stakeholder pressure, such as increasing interest in sustainable investing, can be one reason, which suggests that sustainability can be considered as a form of stakeholder management. However, literature suggests that sustainability also has a genuine business case, and that companies can do well by doing their

business sustainably. CSR initiatives can affect the firm's performance positively either directly or indirectly (see e.g. Lindgreen, Swaen & Johnston, 2009; Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2010). Direct impact on the performance refers to financial gains. On the other hand, examples of indirect effects on firm performance are improved corporate reputation and stakeholder satisfaction (Lindgreen et al., 2009, p. 319). This can also be turned the other way around: if a company does no CSR activities and does not seem responsible, it can harm the company's reputation and have a negative effect on firm performance. This can also happen even if a company is actively involved in CSR initiatives, but is unable to communicate it effectively to its stakeholders. How sustainability is communicated is thus an important aspect to consider when the company wants to reap the benefits (Du et al., 2010). Different channels and strategies for communicating sustainability is discussed next.

2.3 Communicating sustainability

As mentioned, communicating sustainability is an important part of reaping the benefits. However, this is not an easy task. Sometimes companies simply inform their stakeholders about their CSR initiatives, without actually engaging in dialogue with them, or even truly implementing the CSR initiatives in their business. Some companies might communicate about their CSR activities only because they are afraid of reputational consequences if they do not do so, or they see that communicating about CSR might improve their reputation. This is sometimes referred to as greenwashing, which means that companies are saying they are promoting environmentally sustainable practices just for the sake of good publicity, but in reality, they are far from it. (Cornelissen, 2014, p. 245.)

This suggests that companies need to be careful not to overly promote their sustainability, but to promise and say only what is true and will be done. Minimizing stakeholder skepticism about a company's CSR initiatives is actually one of the key challenges in CSR communication (Du et al., 2010, p. 9). Some sustainability communication strategies are presented next.

2.3.1 Sustainability communication strategies

Many scholars have developed different sustainability communication strategies and tactics. The most relevant ones are discussed now. Building on his CSR categorization, Carroll (1979) developed a model of corporate social performance. The model includes six different types of social issues and the company's strategy in responding to those issues. The social issues are consumerism, environment, discrimination, product safety, occupational safety, and shareholders. The response strategies are proaction, accommodation, defense, and reaction. (Carroll, 1979, pp. 503-504.) A company's social performance can be evaluated by using this model. An example of a sustainability performance evaluation could reveal that an oil company might respond defensively to environmental issues, but proactively to occupational safety issues. This means that the company can have different response strategies to different social issues.

Morsing and Schultz (2006) developed a stakeholder-centric framework that includes three strategies for communicating CSR: stakeholder information strategy, stakeholder response strategy, and stakeholder involvement strategy. In the first strategy, the organization's only goal is to inform the stakeholders about the organization's CSR activities, without asking for input from the stakeholders. The focus is on sensegiving, not sensemaking, thus the company does not try to influence the stakeholders to change their perception. Here the company believes that their one-way communication is enough, and no input from the stakeholders is needed. (Morsing & Schultz, 2006.)

In the second strategy, the organization engages in dialogue with the stakeholders to some extent by asking feedback on its CSR activities, however the organization itself still decides in the end which activities it will do and which not. Here the company moves from sensegiving to sensemaking, as the organization tries to influence the stakeholders and change their perception. (Morsing & Schultz, 2006.)

The third strategy takes this up to another level: the organization actively involves the stakeholders in the decision-making regarding its CSR activities. There is dialogue to both directions. Both parties try to influence each other, thus sensemaking is two-ways. In

addition, the company is actually willing to change its activities according to stakeholder wishes. (Morsing & Schultz, 2006.) The authors suggest the use of the third strategy, the stakeholder involvement strategy, as they claim that in order for managers to be able to communicate CSR better, they should truly engage stakeholders into the CSR communication. However, they do not suggest to abandon the stakeholder information or response strategies completely either. (Morsing & Schultz, 2006, p.336.)

The third strategy, stakeholder involvement, is also supported by Maon, Lingdreen and Swaen (2009) who suggest engaging in continuous dialogue with stakeholders. They argue that with dialogue, the company can, firstly, recognize and meet the stakeholders' expectations well in time, and secondly, expand the company's knowledge of certain matters with the help of the stakeholders. In addition, further development of CSR will be easier when the stakeholders are involved. (Maon et al., 2009, pp. 83-85.)

In terms of reputation management and actually achieving sustainability benefits, the third strategy does seem to be the ideal one, as the aim is to learn from the stakeholders to develop company activities. When stakeholders are actively involved in planning and implementing sustainability activities in cooperation with the organization, they are aware of what is going on. This way, there is less need for them to "attack" the organization in case some initiative does not turn out right, as they were already involved in it. Engaging stakeholders in the sustainability activity process can also bring benefits by giving ideas to the organization that they had not thought of before, and looking at the issue from another angle. If the organization merely informs the stakeholders of their activities, or even asks for input but does not deliver, this is likely to call for disagreement from the stakeholders.

The three strategies suggested by Morsing and Schultz are supported by Herremans, Nazari and Mahmoudian (2016) as well. They identified those three strategies in companies' sustainability communications, and in addition, five characteristics that were associated with them. The five characteristics are "(1) directness of communication, (2) clarity in stakeholder identification, (3) deliberateness of collecting feedback, (4) broadness of stakeholder inclusiveness, and (5) utilization of stakeholder engagement for learning" (Herremans et al.,

2016, p. 425). All of these five characteristics were low in the information strategy, mediocre in the response strategy, and high in the involvement strategy (Herremans et al. 2016, p. 426). This makes sense, as for example in the information strategy the goal is not to include stakeholders, whereas in the involvement strategy it is.

Herremans et al. (2016, pp. 430-433) also found that those companies that used the involvement strategy communicated with more stakeholders, including those with legitimacy and urgency but no power, in order to learn from them. Moreover, those companies that used the information or response strategy were more inclined to communicate only with the most important stakeholders. (Herremans et al. 2016, pp. 430-433.) This brings us back to stakeholder management and the stakeholder salience model presented in subchapter 2.1. With the help of the stakeholder salience model, the company can identify its key stakeholders, and then decide which stakeholders it wants to communicate with and how.

Du, Bhattacharya and Sen (2010) developed a communications framework aimed at maximizing business returns from CSR activities. Their framework includes aspects related to the CSR messages, the contingency factors affecting the communication, and the communication outcomes. As this thesis studies sustainability communication messages, the message content section of this framework deserves a more thorough introduction.

According to Du et al. (2010), companies can try to persuade stakeholders by emphasizing four aspects in sustainability communications. These aspects include 1) the company's commitment to the CSR issue; 2) the impact the company's involvement has on the issue; 3) the reasons for why the company is involved; and 4) how the issue fits the company's business. (Du et al., 2010, p. 11.)

A company can emphasize its *commitment* to the CSR issue in three ways. Firstly, by communicating the amount of input it has put in the issue. Secondly, by emphasizing the durability of its commitment in the issue. Thirdly, by highlighting the consistency of its commitment in the issue. (Du et al., 2010, p. 11.)

Highlight the *impact* the company's involvement has on the issue is also a possibility. This means that in addition to emphasizing the inputs the company has made; it should also highlight what are the consequences of the inputs. This is easiest done by demonstrating the outputs that will happen because of the company's actions. (Du et al., 2010, pp. 11-12.)

A company can also emphasize the *motives* behind the decision to be involved in a particular issue. This can be helpful especially in battling stakeholder skepticism. Some choose to communicate altruistic motives whereas other decide to communicate the true business motivations for engaging in CSR. (Du et al., 2010, p. 12.)

The last aspect to emphasize is to explain how the issue *fits* the company's business. This means communicating how the CSR issue is connected to the company's line of business. In the event that the company has chosen to partake in issues that do not seem to be connected to its business, even more emphasis should be placed on its communication. (Du et al., 2010, pp. 12-13.)

This last aspect, the CSR fit, has also been criticized. Villagra, Cárdaa and Ruiz San Román (2016) argue that the fit between the issue and the company might not be as a significant factor as the fit between the issue and the personal views of the stakeholder. This can mean that perhaps nowadays sustainability is viewed more personally and stakeholders have stronger opinions about CSR than before. This would suggest that in addition, or instead of, considering whether the CSR issue is a good fit for the corporation, more focus should be placed on finding out the issues that would fit the stakeholders best when developing CSR initiatives and communicating about them.

As always in communication, the effect and success of it is not only up to the sender of the message, but also to the receiver, who encodes the message and makes interpretations out of it. This is no different in sustainability communication, so the contingency factors need to be taken into account. For example, the company's reputation as well as stakeholders' support or opposition for the issue may influence the success of the company's CSR communication (Du et al., 2010, pp. 15-17). All this suggests that in order to successfully communicate sustainability with its stakeholders, the company should know its stakeholders and their

expectations well. Thus, successful stakeholder mapping as well as engaging in dialogue with the stakeholders is important.

The variety of channels for communicating CSR messages is large. A company can communicate the CSR activities by itself through a CSR report, press releases, website, advertising, at the point of purchase, or even through PR. (Du et al., 2010, pp. 13-14.) As annual sustainability reporting is one of the most common tools for communicating sustainability, it is discussed next in more detail.

2.3.2 Sustainability reporting as a communication tool

Many companies publish yearly reports where they present their social and environmental advances. There are many terms for these yearly reports: corporate responsibility reports, sustainability reports, and CSR reports (Gatti & Seele, 2014). Lately, the terms environmental and social have been used less in the titles of these reports, whereas the term sustainability has been used more (Gatti & Seele, 2014). In this paper, the term sustainability report will cover all of these reports, and the term CSR report will only be used when discussing theory that uses that term. All of these reports can be considered as a form of stakeholder communication.

Companies publish sustainability reports due to external or internal pressure, or the opportunity to share the company's story (Searcy & Buslovich, 2014, p. 154). An example of external pressure is the rise of sustainable investing. Investors are calling out for more information about the companies' non-financial performance (e.g. Hockerts & Moir, 2004). Investors showing interest in sustainability means that companies firstly have to place more focus on it, but also communicate it better. This has no doubt sparked the increase in the number of companies that publish a sustainability report. Out of the 250 largest companies in the world, 92 percent reported on their sustainability activities in 2015 (KPMG, 2015, p. 30). In addition to external stakeholder communication, sustainability reports can also be used internally, for example, for employee awareness and engagement, and as an internal reference tool (Searcy & Buslovich, 2014, p. 164).

Despite the aforementioned motivations for sustainability reporting, not all companies report on their sustainability. Reasons for not reporting can be:

“(1) a lack of external stakeholder pressure; (2) no perceived benefits and thus little motivation to report; (3) SR [sustainability reporting] is a nice-to-do, not must-do; (4) a compliance culture towards sustainability; and (5) the organizational structure and/or culture does not encourage reporting” (Stubbs, Higgins & Milne, 2013, p. 461).

In some industries, the companies may not have external pressure to report sustainability, whereas in some industries, for example environmentally sensitive ones, companies may face a lot of stakeholder pressure to disclose environmental information.

As mentioned, reporting sustainability is not mandatory by regulation in most countries, however certain guidelines do exist, and the reporting companies can follow them if they wish. Some of these guidelines are widely used, for example the Sustainability Reporting Standards created by the independent organization Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). The reporting standards were originally created to ensure that companies act responsibly towards the environment; however, now the standards include social and governance factors as well (GRI, n.d.). In 2014, almost 4,000 companies published GRI-certified reports (Chersan, 2016, p. 427).

The structure and contents of sustainability reports vary (e.g. Searcy & Buslovich, 2014). However, GRI recommends the following content to be included:

- “strategy and analysis
- organizational profile
- report parameters
- management approach
- performance indicators (economic, environmental, social, labor practices and decent work, human rights, society, product responsibility)” (Burke & Clark, 2016, p. 280).

The chosen sustainability communication strategy has an impact on the reporting in terms of stakeholder engagement, as was discussed in the previous subchapter. External stakeholders

can be utilized in the preparation of a sustainability report. Reasons for not involving stakeholders into the reporting can include “time limitations and a fear of opening up” (Searcy & Buslovich, 2014, p. 167). According to Joensuu, Koskela and Onkila (2015), the level of engagement with environmental NGOs in sustainability reports has increased in recent years. Previously, the relationships were inexistent whereas nowadays these relationships are collaborative. Nonetheless, collaboration is mostly limited to individual projects without business significance. These relationships can be monetary relationships, management system relationships, collaborative relationships, dialogue relationships or conflicting relationships. (Joensuu et al., 2015). This suggests that even if a company chooses to utilize the previously mentioned stakeholder involvement strategy, the extent of the involvement can vary from sponsoring to true collaboration.

As mentioned, stakeholder skepticism is a major concern in communicating sustainability, and this applies to sustainability reporting as well. In order to create a credible CSR report, companies first strive to make themselves understood by their stakeholders, and only after that take other measures to increase credibility; such as, using standards and assurance in the reporting, engaging stakeholders, and tailoring the communication for specific stakeholders (Lock & Seele 2016, p. 194). Communication plays an important part in all of these. Again, the importance of knowing the stakeholders and their expectations is highlighted: by knowing the stakeholders, a company is better able to communicate with them. Moreover, stakeholder engagement is linked to the stakeholder involvement strategy.

The length of the report can also have some effect on credibility, as research shows that longer reports can be more credible. The format of the report (a stand-alone report or a combined report) on the other hand does not have an effect on credibility, which would suggest that integrated reporting does not increase credibility just by combining the reports. (Lock & Seele, 2016.) This suggests that if companies simply combine their sustainability report with financial information, it will not improve the credibility of the report. Instead, focus should be placed on truly integrating these reports into a cohesive report. What this actually means is discussed in the next subchapter where integrated reporting is presented.

2.4 Integrated reporting

Integrated reporting is a model of corporate reporting where, instead of publishing the aforementioned separate sustainability report focused solely on the company's sustainability activities, the organization publishes a report that integrates this information into the financial information and the company strategy, giving a thorough understanding for the reader about all the ways the company creates value.

Regulation states that publicly listed companies have to disclose their annual financial performance in the means of an annual financial report (e.g. in Finland it is regulated by the Accounting Act 1336). The annual financial reports are especially important to those who have financial capital attached to the company, so analysts, investors and shareholders, and the reports are often made with that reader in mind, thus focusing on the financial performance.

As integrated reporting is voluntary with a few exceptions, for example South Africa where companies must either publish an integrated report or specifically explain why they do not do so (the Integrated Reporting Committee of South Africa, n.d.), there are no universal standards based on which integrated reporting should be done. However, to unify the practices of integrated reporting, the IIRC created an integrated reporting framework, the <IR> framework, that organizations can use in their reporting. As mentioned in the introduction, when discussing integrated reporting in this paper, it refers to integrated reporting done in accordance with the IIRC's <IR> framework.

The IIRC (2013, p. 7) defines an integrated report as "... a concise communication about how an organization's strategy, governance, performance and prospects, in the context of its external environment, lead to the creation of value over the short, medium and long term." As the definition explicitly states, the integrated report is a communications tool. According to the definition, the aim of the report is to communicate in the best way possible the organization's story and value creation process. As Churet and Eccles (2014) point out, the IIRC's definition for integrated reporting does not include the term "sustainability" at all.

Despite this, sustainability is understood to be a key concept in integrated reporting when looking at recent literature (see e.g. Churet & Eccles, 2014; Knauer & Serafeim, 2014).

Churet and Eccles define integrated reporting as

“the convergence of the sustainability report and the financial report into a single ‘narrative’ – a communication intended mainly for investors in which top management provides its views on how sustainability issues and initiatives are expected to contribute to the long-term growth strategy of the business.” (Churet & Eccles, 2014, p. 56)

Their definition includes explicitly the concept of sustainability. As the definition suggests, the intention behind an integrated report is to explain how sustainability issues can contribute to the long-term success of the company.

2.4.1 The integrated reporting framework

Before literature about integrated reporting is discussed, the integrated reporting framework and its contents regarding instructions for the actual integrated report require a more thorough presentation. The IIRC (2013, p. 7) states that the potential audiences for an integrated report are primarily the providers of financial capital, i.e. the shareholders and investors. Other stakeholders who may be interested in the report include for example employees, customers, regulators, and partners. As mentioned, the main purpose of the report is to provide a cohesive overview of how the company creates value over time. In order to do this, the report includes financial and other information. The framework does not state what specific information or which key performance indicators (KPIs) should be included in the report, as it needs to be determined case by case by the organization itself. (The IIRC, 2013, p. 7.)

An integrated report should not be just a compilation of information provided in other material, such as the sustainability report and the financial statements. An integrated report should present relevant information and explain the links between different aspects and their role in the creation of value over time. (The IIRC, 2013, p. 8.) There is no definite structure set for an integrated report. However, generally an integrated report covers the following content:

- “organizational overview and external environment
- governance
- business model
- risks and opportunities
- strategy and resource allocation
- performance
- outlook
- basis of preparation and presentation” (Burke & Clark, 2016, p. 280).

A key part of the integrated reporting framework is the different capitals that the organization has in its use: financial, manufactured, intellectual, human, social and relationship, and natural capital. The idea is that an organization cannot create value by itself, and that external players and factors need to be taken into consideration and accounted for when providing the shareholders and investors with information about the organization’s ability to create value. Financial capital refers to the funds that the organization has received through financing and that it can use to produce its products and services. Manufactured capital refers to physical objects that the organization can use when producing its goods or services, for example buildings. Intellectual capital means, for example, the patents and copyrights that the company has in its possession. Human capital refers to the competencies of the people within the organization. Social and relationship capital includes, for example, key stakeholder relationships, shared norms and values, and intangibles related to the organization’s brand. Natural capital means environmental resources, both renewable and non-renewable. (The IIRC, 2013, pp. 10-12.) From these capitals, at least the social and relationship capitals, as well as the natural capital, can be considered as aspects of sustainability that have been discussed earlier. Hence, it can be said that sustainability is incorporated into integrated reporting even though it is not explicitly mentioned in the IIRC’s official definition of integrated reporting.

2.4.2 Integrated reporting research

As mentioned, integrated reporting is a rather new phenomenon, thus, research on the topic is limited. The existing literature regarding integrated reporting is discussed next.

The IIRC claims that benefits of adopting the <IR> framework are for example better understanding of the organization's value creation, improved decision making, enhanced external stakeholder relations, and improved cooperation between departments (the IIRC & BlackSun, 2014). These benefits presented by the IIRC have been found in literature as well. One example of this is by Burke and Clark (2016).

By analyzing 19 unstructured panel interviews where integrated reporting was discussed, Burke and Clark (2016) were able to identify potential benefits for a business from adopting integrated reporting. According to their findings, a company's internal operations can benefit from integrated reporting with three ways. Firstly, by getting a better understanding of how the company creates value, the company's managers can make better-informed decisions. Secondly, integrated reporting can improve the collaboration and communication across the organization. Thirdly, decision-making and reporting were also improved due to new measurement attributes that were not measured before. In addition to the internal benefits, external ones were identified as well. Perhaps the biggest benefit was improved external relations, especially with shareholders and investors. The integrated report itself was commended for being a helpful tool when communicating with other stakeholders as well, such as employees, potential customers, and the board of directors. (Burke & Clark, 2016, pp. 275-276.) These findings by Burke and Clark are aligned with those benefits stated by the IIRC. It seems that integrated reporting can improve the internal and external understanding of the company's value creation, enhance the company's decision-making, improve cooperation between different departments within the company, and improve external corporate relationships.

Havlová (2015) studied how the number of disclosure reports has changed with those companies that joined the IIRC's integrated reporting framework pilot program. Her findings indicate that the number of reports the companies published had decreased since joining the

integrated reporting pilot program (Havlová, 2015, p. 235.) This suggests that another benefit of integrated reporting is that it lessens the workload of preparing many different reports within a company.

Some research has been carried out to shed light on the determinants of companies that start integrated reporting: what kind of companies are likely to adopt integrated reporting and what kind are not. General political conditions, such as the level of investor protection within a country does not seem to affect companies' willingness to adopt the integrated reporting model (Jensen & Berg, 2012). In fact, it has been suggested if governments want companies to commit to integrated reporting, it must be done by law, as has been done in South Africa (Jensen & Berg, 2012).

Moreover, companies that assure their CSR reports are more likely to adopt the integrated reporting model than companies that do not assure their CSR reports (Sierra-García, Zorio-Grima & García-Benau, 2015). Assuring CSR reports can be understood as a way of trying to convince the stakeholders of the company's CSR efforts, as research has pointed out that assurance can have a positive effect on the credibility of the report (Lock & Seele, 2016). This supports the view that companies that want to prove their sustainability efforts to their stakeholders would be likely to start integrated reporting.

The motivation for moving to integrated reporting has received some attention as well. An Australian customer-owned bank's employees mentioned being able to tell the company story in a concise way as well as improving the internal performance, values and disciplines as drivers for transitioning to integrated reporting (Lodhia, 2015, p. 594). Being able to better tell the company story is again an indicator of the integrated report as a communication tool.

Integrated report as a communication tools is supported also by Stacchezzini, Melloni and Lai (2016). However, their outlook on integrated reporting as a communication tool is more negative. Stacchezzini et al. (2016) claim that integrated reporting is mainly used to enhance the company's sustainability image, instead of using it to actually advance sustainability initiatives within the company. This is based on their study of how sustainability management is communicated in the value creation section of integrated reports. They argue that

companies may disclose biased information about their sustainability activities in the reports for example by leaving out information that is unfavorable for the company. The authors also found out that companies do not provide much “forward-looking information about their sustainability actions and performance”. (Stacchezzini et al., 2016, pp. 6-7.) Their study did not however explore the contents of the report as a whole, but only one section of it, so it can be questioned whether this is truly the case or not. The possibility to present biased sustainability information does not involve only integrated reporting, for as Reilly (2009) claimed, a lack of standardized reporting can lead to a biased representation of a company’s sustainability efforts in sustainability reporting. Based on this argument, it can be assumed that global standards such as the integrated reporting framework could have a positive impact on the validity of sustainability information reported in the integrated reports.

2.4.3 Integrated thinking

As has been discussed, one goal of the IIRC’s integrated reporting framework is to promote integrated thinking within the company by breaking down organizational silos and promoting cooperation across teams and departments. The IIRC (2013, p. 33) defines integrated thinking as “the active consideration by an organization of the relationships between its various operating and functional units and the capitals that the organization uses or affects.” They continue by saying that “Integrated thinking leads to integrated decision-making and actions that consider the creation of value over the short, medium and long term” (The IIRC, 2013, p. 33). As the extent of integrated thinking within the company increases, the more information will the company’s management receive. This will in turn enhance the reporting, analysis and decision-making of the management. (The IIRC 2013, p. 2.) This suggests that integrated reporting is not just about the report itself, but also about the bigger change that it can have in a company.

Various definitions for integrated thinking exist. The Prince of Wales’ Accounting for Sustainability project defines integrated thinking as “embedding sustainability into decision making and strategy” (Accounting for Sustainability, n.d.). Knauer and Serafeim (2014, p. 58-59) define integrated thinking as the systematic management of natural, human, financial,

physical, intellectual and social capital, where the end objective is to ensure sustainable profitability. Both of these definitions acknowledge that the non-financial aspects need to be taken into consideration in the decision-making. This view is accepted in this thesis as well; when using the term integrated thinking in this paper, it refers to how sustainability is integrated into the company's strategy and management.

To build on this, Churet and Eccles argue,

“... companies that proactively manage the risks and opportunities arising from social and environmental issues are also more likely to communicate on sustainability issues in an integrated way. This confirms our view that integrated reporting reflects integrated thinking and an integrated approach to the management of sustainability issues.” (Churet and Eccles, 2014 pp. 60-61).

This suggests that if integrated thinking happens in the organization, it should be reflected on their communications.

Oliver, Vesty and Brooks (2016) suggest that the concepts of hard and soft thinking can be utilized when wanting to study whether integrated thinking exists in a company. They state that hard thinking can be seen as how the company communicates its capitals and their relationships as quantitative KPIs. Soft thinking on the other hand refers to having a more comprehensive approach of integrating sustainability to a company's practices. Soft integrated thinking can be seen in the company for example if sustainability is seen as a part of the big picture instead of as a separate, stand-alone activity. (Oliver et al., 2016, p. 235-237.) Based on these definitions, both concepts seem appropriate for integrated reporting. As the goal of integrated reporting is to provide a holistic picture of the company's overall operations, soft thinking applies, however; hard systems thinking with its KPIs is also strongly related, as the company reports on its KPIs and use of capitals.

Integrated thinking has a link to communications as well. The strategic role of corporate communications is to align all company's communications, both internal and external, to promote a cohesive image of the company to all of its stakeholders (Cornelissen, 2014). Corporate communications should therefore “harness the strategic interests of the

organization at large” (Cornelissen, 2014, p. 5). This implies that an organization’s communication strategy should reflect the company’s overall strategy to support the business objectives. This again means that if integrated thinking exists in a company, i.e. sustainability is integrated into the company’s strategy; it should be reflected on the overall communications of the company.

2.5 Theoretical framework

In this chapter, theory related to stakeholder management, sustainability, sustainability communication and integrated reporting has been discussed. The theoretical framework for this study is based on this literature and is presented now.

Stakeholder management theory is the starting point for the theoretical framework of this thesis. Different stakeholders can have different levels of importance for an organization, in other words, stakeholders have different roles, and those roles can change over time (Mitchell et al., 1997). In addition, the needs of the stakeholders vary, and can change in time. As an example, in the past, investors were mainly interested in financial performance, but are nowadays looking for information about the non-financial performance of a company as well (Hockerts & Moir, 2004). This information need needs to be addressed accordingly. Thus, more emphasis has recently been placed on sustainability reporting as a way of communicating these non-financial aspects, as many companies are now publishing sustainability reports (KPMG, 2015).

In this paper, sustainability is defined using the triple bottom line concept. Thus, sustainability is understood as a company’s economic, social and environmental responsibilities. In order to benefit from the advantages of operating sustainably, it is important for companies to communicate their sustainability to the relevant stakeholder (Du et al., 2010). Many strategies exist for companies to take when communicating sustainability. Morsing and Schultz (2006) have named three: the stakeholder information strategy, the stakeholder response strategy and the stakeholder involvement strategy. Out of these, the third one is claimed to be especially effective. Recently, companies have started to implement this kind of an involvement strategy in their sustainability reporting more often with

environmental NGOs (Joensuu et al., 2015). Thus, sustainability communications, or sustainability reporting, should not be considered as one-way communication, for dialogue can be achieved with it as well. In addition, Du et al. (2010, p. 11) highlight four persuasion tactics used in sustainability messages: the company's commitment to the issue, the impact of the company's involvement, motivation for the involvement, and how the issue fits the company's business.

As the aspects of non-financial performance have become increasingly important, a more holistic view to the company's overall performance has been called for. The integrated reporting framework <IR> has been developed to provide a more cohesive picture of the overall success and performance of the company to investors and other interested stakeholders. Integrated reporting has been complemented as bringing many benefits to companies (e.g. Burke & Clark, 2016; Lodhia, 2015); however, what changes it has on communicating sustainability is still under-researched.

Companies have different motivations to start integrated reporting. One potential reason can be that it makes communicating the company story easier (Lodhia, 2015). Some determinants for why some companies start integrated reporting while others do not have been identified. For instance, companies that assure their sustainability reports are likely to start integrated reporting as well (Sierra-García et al., 2015). Assuring sustainability reports can increase their credibility (Lock & Seele, 2016). Thus, it can be assumed that companies that start integrated reporting care about their credibility in sustainability.

Integrated reporting is said to lead to integrated thinking (the IIRC, 2013), which in this thesis is defined as embedding sustainability into the company's strategy and decision-making. Thus, it can be assumed that a company that has integrated sustainability into its strategy should be communicating its sustainability in its overall communications, and not just in its sustainability-specific communication. Nonetheless, integrated reporting has been criticized as not truly improving the companies' sustainability efforts, and that companies have not really implemented sustainability into their strategy (Stacchezzini et al., 2016). The theoretical framework is illustrated in Figure 3.

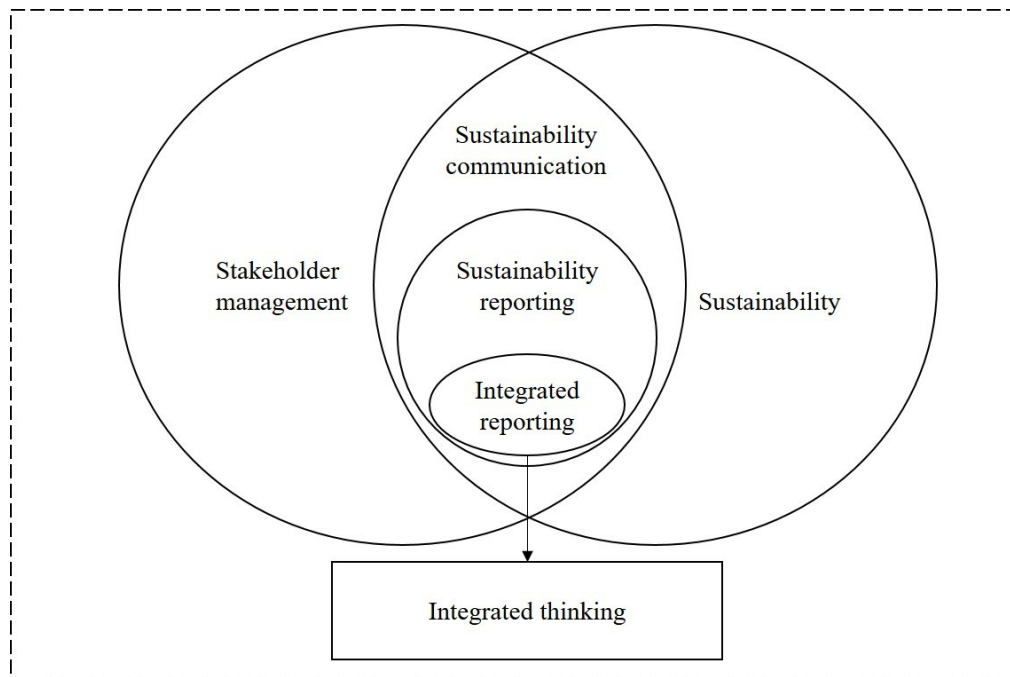


Figure 3: The theoretical framework for this study

As can be seen from Figure 3, the theoretical framework is formed by stakeholder management theory and sustainability theory that form the link of sustainability communication. The concept of sustainability communication contains many different tools and channels; however, the focus in this paper is on sustainability reporting, and in integrated reporting as a particular form of sustainability reporting. Integrated reporting is said to lead to integrated thinking.

Existing literature and the theoretical framework for this study have now been introduced. The next chapter presents and discusses the research method choices.

3 Data and methods

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the objectives of this study are to explore how communicating sustainability has changed in companies' external communications after the implementation of integrated reporting, and to see how the companies demonstrate integrated thinking in their communications (i.e. whether sustainability has been implemented into the strategy). This chapter presents the research material that was chosen for the data collection, as well as the research methods used in this study. The chapter ends with a discussion about the trustworthiness of the study.

It should be noted that business research can be influenced by many factors, for example, practical considerations and the researcher's personal values (Bryman & Bell, 2003, p. 29-30). To give a true account of the research process, factors affecting the research are discussed in this chapter where appropriate.

This study takes a qualitative approach. This was deemed more appropriate for this study than quantitative approach for two reasons. First, the general division between qualitative and quantitative research is that qualitative research aims to generate new theory, whereas quantitative research tries to test hypotheses and existing theories (Bryman & Bell 2003, p. 27). The objective of this research was to contribute to theory with an exploratory approach, not to test a hypothesis, pointing towards a qualitative approach. Second, qualitative methods are suitable for "what" and "how" research questions (Silverman, 2011, p.25). The focus of this research was to study how companies communicate, again pointing us in the qualitative research approach direction. The data selection is presented next.

3.1 Data selection

The possibility to use naturally occurring data is one of the strengths in qualitative research (Silverman, 2011, p. 17). Corporate documents, published by an organization, are one example of naturally occurring data, as the organization would publish them even without the research. As the purpose of this study was to explore the change in the companies' external communications, studying naturally occurring data from an outside perspective was

considered to give a truthful representation of the phenomenon. Corporate publications, such as annual reports, financial reports, sustainability reports, press releases, as well as social media posts and company websites, are all publicly accessible to anyone online and provide an excellent channel to observe the communications from an outside perspective. Thus, it was decided that public company documents would be suitable research material for this study.

To answer the research questions, it was important to include material from two different points in time: before and after the company had adopted integrated reporting. As the IIRC and the Pilot Programme was formed in 2011, 2010 was chosen as the first year of analysis. Reports from 2015 were the newest reports available at the time of the research. In order to study the long-term changes, it was decided to utilize the newest reports available. Thus, the company publications to be studied would be from the years 2010 and 2015.

Companies publish many different documents, such as corporate reports. These can include annual reports, financial reports, sustainability reports, and integrated reports. These corporate reports can cover anything from 50-300 pages in length, and the reports vary in structure and content. Silverman (2011, p. 46) suggests to use only a limited amount of data in order to get a deep analysis of the phenomenon. To enable a deep analysis and make sure the findings are comparable, it was decided that the analysis would be conducted of only one section in the reports. The section to be analyzed was chosen to be the executive's (CEO and/or the Chairman of the Board) message in the reports. This section was chosen for four reasons. Firstly, each corporate report traditionally contains this section, where the management addresses the readers. Secondly, these messages have been studied in literature to reveal the rhetoric of the "corporate voice" (see Kendall, 1993), so they can be considered suitable to reveal insights about the companies' sustainability approach as well. Thirdly, these messages act as an "introduction" to the contents of the entire report. Fourthly, an integrated report is supposed to provide the top management's viewpoint about how sustainability issues contribute to the business (Churet & Eccles, 2014, p. 56), so studying the top management's messages seems appropriate.

In addition, Kendall has pointed out that it is important to study these messages in corporate reports because

“...it is communication over which organizations exert complete control. It is the embodiment of the organization’s ideal. Studying boiler plates allows us to see organizations in what they consider to be their most impressive light. What is said and what is left unsaid, what is touted and what is ignored can all be answered when we examine the rhetoric of corporate reports” (Kendall, 1993, p. 572).

This is why studying corporate reports is expected to give a good understanding of the change in companies’ communications, as the reports represent the companies’ views. To summarize, the data was collected from executive’s messages in corporate reports (annual, sustainability and integrated reports) from 2010 and 2015.

When conducting analysis from text documents, it is important to evaluate the “authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning” of these documents (Bryman & Bell, 2003, p. 567). The meaning of annual, sustainability and integrated reports has been described earlier in this thesis; however, the other three criteria deserve a deeper examination. Textual communication forms one important aspect of how organizations construct reality (Bloomfield & Vurdubakis, 1994), and all of these corporate reports were created and published by the companies themselves. Thus, it is safe to say that their authenticity is unquestioned. Credibility on the other hand is subjective in regards to what is meant by it. As has been stated, claims have been made that companies can present biased information for example in their integrated reports (Stacchezzini et al. 2016) which could imply that the credibility of the content can be questioned. However, corporate reports are credible in the sense that they provide an understanding of *how* companies communicate sustainability, which is the topic studied in this thesis. These publications can also be considered representative of the companies’ overall communications as they cover a wide range of audiences.

After the data material was selected, it was time to choose which companies’ publications would be studied. In order to get cohesive insights of the change integrated reporting can

have on sustainability communications, it was decided that all companies studied should be in the same phase of integrated reporting. To enable this, the data selection was done from those companies who participated in the IIRC's original Pilot Programme in 2011 (the IIRC, 2012, p. 10). Studying companies in the same stage in integrated reporting provides a more cohesive starting point for the analysis than studying companies in different stages. This was important for mapping out the change that integrated reporting has on sustainability communications.

The study focused on one geographical area in order to get deeper insights from one location. Out of the 77 companies that participated in the IIRC's Pilot Programme, 48 were from Europe, eight from Asia, seven from North America, five from South America, five from Africa and four from Oceania (the IIRC, 2012). The clear majority of these companies being from Europe indicates that European companies are "pioneers" in the adoption of integrated reporting and provide the most data. Thus, Europe was chosen as the location.

As described above, 48 European companies participated in the Pilot Programme. However; out of those companies, only 25 were still mentioned in the IIRC's list of European reporters in December 2016 (the IIRC, n.d.). This indicates that some of the Pilot Programme companies decided not to engage in integrated reporting after all, or for some other reason were not included on the list on the IIRC's website. Nonetheless, the data selection for this research was then done from the 25 European companies that were involved in the Pilot Programme, and were still doing integrated reporting. A list of those companies can be seen in Appendix 1.

These 25 companies were from seven different countries: Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia, Spain, and the United Kingdom; and represented 14 different industries: aviation, chemicals, construction, electric utility, energy, financial services, IT, oil and gas, pharmaceutical, professional services, real estate, retail, telecommunications, and utilities.

This provided the perfect opportunity to utilize the maximum variation sampling strategy as described by Patton (2002, p. 234). In maximum variation sampling, the data is collected from cases that are different from each other. Maximum variation sampling helps identify

themes that are common throughout the cases even though the cases are different, thus emphasizing the significance of the common themes (Patton, 2002, 235). As Patton (2002, p. 235) says: “Any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared dimensions of a setting or phenomenon”. Maximum variation sampling is set to provide findings of two sorts. Firstly, “high-quality, detailed descriptions of each case, which are useful for documenting uniquenesses” and secondly, “important shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity” (Patton, 2002, p. 235). This strategy is especially suitable for the current research problem, as there is only little research about the changes integrated reporting brings. The detailed descriptions provide valuable insights about different companies’ approaches to integrated reporting and sustainability communication, whereas the common patterns help understand the bigger picture behind the details.

Thus, the case companies were selected so that they represented different countries as well as different industries for maximum variation. The final selection of the seven companies that formed the data sample is listed in Table 1, including name, home country and industry. Some industries can be considered environmentally sensitive industries, for example oil and gas, basic materials, industrials and utilities (Stacchezzini et al. 2016, p. 4). Out of the industries included in this study, electric utility, construction, and oil and gas are considered environmentally sensitive.

Table 1: The companies included in the study

Company	Home country	Industry
Novo Nordisk	Denmark	Pharmaceuticals
EnBW Energie Baden-Württemberg	Germany	Electric utility
Assicurazioni Generali	Italy	Financial services
Royal BAM Group	the Netherlands	Construction
Rosneft	Russia	Oil and gas
Telefónica	Spain	Telecommunications
Marks and Spencer	the United Kingdom	Retail

As can be seen from Table 1, the companies are Novo Nordisk, EnBW Energie Baden-Württemberg, Assicurazioni Generali, Royal BAM Group, Rosneft, Telefónica, and Marks and Spencer. The data material, corporate reports, were mainly collected from the companies' websites as pdf documents. The only exception is Generali's annual report 2010, where the executive's message was included only on the online version of the report. The research material is shown in Table 2 and links to all documents are provided in Appendix 2.

Table 2: Summary of the data selection

Company	Year	Document	Number of pages of executive's message
<i>Novo Nordisk</i>	2010	Annual report	3
	2015	Integrated report	3
<i>EnBW</i>	2010	Annual report Sustainability report	4 2
	2015	Integrated report	2
<i>Generali</i>	2010	Annual report Sustainability report	1 1
	2015	Integrated report Sustainability report	2 2
<i>BAM</i>	2010	Annual report Sustainability report	1 3
	2015	Integrated report	1
<i>Rosneft</i>	2010	Annual report Sustainability report	6 4
	2015	Integrated report Sustainability report	4 4
<i>Telefónica</i>	2010	Annual report Sustainability report	4 2
	2015	Integrated report	4
<i>M&S</i>	2010	Annual report Sustainability report	6 1
	2015	Integrated report Sustainability report	4 1
Total number of pages			65

As Table 2 shows, the study material consisted of 23 corporate reports. Out of this, 65 pages, executive's messages, formed the data for the analysis. Companies have different naming conventions for their reports, and the names can vary a lot, for example, not all companies call integrated reports "integrated reports", but rather stick with the title "annual report". For cohesiveness and simplicity, all reports done with the integrated reporting framework in 2015 are titled as integrated reports, all sustainability reports from 2010 or 2015 as sustainability reports, and all annual reports from 2010 as annual reports, despite of the different titles the companies may have given them.

In qualitative research, saturation point is considered as the point where the findings repeat each other and no new findings are received, thus no more data collection is necessary (Saumure & Given, 2012, p. 169). In this study, the data collection was carried on until the data saturation point was reached, thus no more material was needed. Now that the data selection process and the selected data have been discussed and presented, a description of the data analysis method is given next.

3.2 Data analysis method

The research method should be chosen to fit the purpose of the study, which for this thesis was to gain insights of how companies' sustainability communications have changed after adopting integrated reporting. The research material was text documents, so a method suitable for analyzing text documents had to be selected. As mentioned in the beginning of Chapter 3, a qualitative research approach was deemed more appropriate for this study.

Qualitative content analysis was considered the most appropriate method for this study for four reasons. Firstly, qualitative content analysis is one of the most common qualitative methods used to analyze textual material (Bryman & Bell, 2003, p. 560; Silverman, 2011, p. 64). Secondly, it highlights the understanding and interpretation of text (Kuckartz, 2014). Thirdly, qualitative content analysis enables systematic analysis of text documents (Mayring, 2000). Lastly, it helps the researcher focus on those aspects of the material that relate to the research question (Schreier, 2013). Thus, the research was carried out as a qualitative content analysis.

Qualitative text analysis is often done by reading the text many times and then identifying the key themes in it (Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori, 2011, p. 530). In qualitative content analysis, some coding scheme should be used to categorize the data (Silverman, 2011; Bryman & Bell, 2003; Schreier, 2013, Mayring, 2000; Kuckartz, 2014). The coding system should be specific enough so that different researchers would be able to come to the same findings as the original researcher (Silverman, 2011, pp. 64-65).

The categorization can either be data-driven (inductive) or theory-driven (deductive) (Mayring, 2000). Data-driven category development means that the categories are developed as the categories are identified in the data, whereas theory-driven category development means that the categories are developed based on existing theory (Mayring, 2000). Schreier (2013) recommends that at least some aspects of the categorization should be data-driven. Mayring (2000) suggests that in both, data-driven and theory-driven approaches, some revision for the categorization should be done during the analysis process to make sure that the categorization fits the data.

As literature suggests, a coding system was created for this study as well. The coding system is a combination of theory-driven and data-driven. To make the coding system as explicit as possible, example sentences or keywords for each sub-category were included in the coding system. This should also help in making sure the findings are repeatable in the future. The coding system used in the study can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3: The coding system

Content analysis coding system			
Category	Sub-category	Definition	Examples/keywords
1. Message topic	1.1 economic	communication about the company's economic responsibility	dividends, profit, business growth, sales, investment
	1.2 social	communication about the company's social responsibility	working conditions, human rights, healthcare, wages, tax payments, social initiatives
	1.3 environmental	communication about the company's environmental responsibility	water, energy, CO2, climate change, environmental initiatives
	1.4 general sustainability	communication about the company's approach to sustainability in general	sustainability reporting, sustainability, corporate social responsibility, sustainability awards
2. Message content	2.1 descriptive	descriptive communication	"The company showed excellent operating performance."
	2.2. quantitative	quantitative communication	"Rosneft is one of the largest Russian companies in terms of revenue; it provides almost 170 thousand jobs."
3. Integrated thinking	3.1 integrated thinking	communication indicates that all aspects of sustainability are taken into consideration in strategy	"By further embedding sustainability into the way we do business we will continue to become more efficient, develop new markets and build customer loyalty."

As can be seen from Table 3, there are three categories: message topic, message content and integrated thinking. The first three topic subcategories (economic, social and environmental)

derive from the triple bottom line concept, however the fourth subcategory, general sustainability, was added during the research as it became evident that the data contained a lot of general sustainability communication that could not be categorized to any of the aforementioned three subcategories. The second category was the message content. This category was data-driven, as it became evident that interesting notions can be made of how companies communicate the different aspects of sustainability. The subcategories here were descriptive and quantitative. The third category was simply integrated thinking, to mark down sentences where signs of integrated thinking can be seen.

Each sentence or passage containing a mention about sustainability was first coded according to the first category (message topic) to the economic, social, environmental or general sustainability subcategory. The sentence or passage could be coded to two or more subcategories within the same category if it contained mentions of multiple sustainability topics. As an example, this sentence from Novo Nordisk's report 2015 was coded as three different social issues:

“We have [1] continued our efforts to improve access to care throughout the world, [2] donating a portion of income from our net insulin sales to the World Diabetes Foundation and [3] supporting improvements in the ability of healthcare systems to diagnose and treat diabetes” (numbering added to the quotation)

In the analysis, the focus was not only on discovering the explicit sustainability messages, but also the implicit ones. An example from EnBW's 2015 integrated report:

“Although we were not able to acquire the wind energy company Prokon, we have successfully pushed forward the expansion of renewable energies under our own steam: Our second offshore wind farm EnBW Baltic 2 was fully connected to the grid in September.”

As the topic here is renewable energy, this sentence was coded as environmental sustainability, even though the company is not explicitly pointing out their environmental sustainability.

After the sentence was coded according to the first category, the same sentence or passage was coded according to the second category (message content) as either descriptive or quantitative information. Finally, if the sentence included signs of integrated thinking, it was coded to the third category, integrated thinking. The analysis of the data was done by calculating how many occurrences of each category were identified in the statements. After these observations were made, the analysis moved on to the deeper analysis phase, where the findings were summarized and compared, to identify any shared patterns or differences among the seven cases that were studied.

Based on the findings derived with the coding system, some interpretations could be made of e.g. the use of different communication tactics (fit, impact, motive, commitment) (Du et al., 2010) or different stakeholder communication strategies (information, response, involvement) (Morsing & Schultz, 2006).

3.3 Trustworthiness of the study

Lincoln and Guba (1985, as cited in Bryman & Bell, 2003, p. 43) suggest that four aspects of trustworthiness should be the criteria for evaluating qualitative research. These are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility refers to how well the findings represent the research phenomenon. Transferability means to what extent the findings can be applied to other contexts. Dependability refers to how well the research could be repeated, i.e. how well the research process was documented. Confirmability means how much the researcher's personal views, such as values, motivation or bias, have affected the research. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, as cited in Bryman & Bell, 2003, p. 43.)

Considering two things, the credibility of the findings in this study can be considered high. Firstly, as was discussed in subchapter 3.1, the research material itself is credible. Secondly, the data has been analyzed systematically with qualitative content analysis.

Transferability of findings to other contexts is more difficult to evaluate in a qualitative study. However, as the data consisted of publications from more than one company, it can be considered that the findings would apply to other companies that have been involved in

integrated reporting for a longer period, especially within Europe, as the data was gathered from European companies.

The research process has been explained in detail, including the data selection, choice of analysis method, development of the categorization for the analysis as well as the analysis process, thus, the research could be repeated by another researcher. However, as is often the case in qualitative research, another researcher might interpret the findings differently and thus the findings might be different. Nonetheless, the researcher in this study has tried to keep personal views as objective as possible regarding the selection, collection and interpretation of the data to ensure confirmability.

Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen and Kyngäs (2014) suggest that the trustworthiness of a qualitative content analysis in particular should be evaluated by the extent to which the different phases of the research process were documented. The three phases are preparation, organization, and reporting (Elo et al. 2014).

The phases of preparation and organization of this study have been documented and thoroughly explained in this chapter on methodology. Details of the data selection and collection were discussed and justifications for the chosen ones were given. The data analysis method and the categorization used have been described in detail as well. The reporting phase, referring to the findings, is presented and discussed in the following chapters.

Ethics is a key part of research and needs to be acknowledged appropriately. As the material for this study is publicly available text material published by the companies themselves, the ethical issues of participant consent or privacy cause no concern in this study. To comply with research ethics in the best way possible, this chapter on methodology was written as openly and honestly as possible to give an accurate account of the research process. It should also be noted that although this thesis was conducted as a commission to a company, the company played no part in the selection, analysis or interpretation of the data.

To conclude this chapter on data and methods, this study was conducted as a qualitative study, where executive's messages from 2010 and 2015 corporate reports from seven

European companies involved in integrated reporting were analyzed. The analysis was carried out as a qualitative content analysis. The study conforms to research ethics and is trustworthy. The findings that were discovered in the research are presented in the next chapter.

4 Findings

This study had two research questions: how do companies communicate sustainability in their corporate reports before and after integrated reporting, and, how do companies communicate integrated thinking in their corporate reports after the adoption of integrated reporting. This chapter presents the findings gathered from the research to these two research questions. For the sake of trustworthiness, the findings are described with as much detail as possible.

As mentioned earlier, using the maximum variation sampling strategy results in two kinds of findings: 1) detailed descriptions of each case and 2) common patterns that are found through the cases (Patton, 2002, p. 235). The findings are presented with respect for the aforementioned description. First, detailed descriptions of the findings from each seven cases are presented in subchapter 4.1. Then, the shared patterns, or key findings, that were found in the cases are presented in subchapter 4.2. A brief summary of the key findings in subchapter 4.3 ends this chapter.

4.1 Description of each case

In this subchapter, a detailed description of each case is given. The companies that were studied were Novo Nordisk, EnBW, Generali, BAM, Rosneft, Telefónica, and Marks and Spencer. The cases are presented in this order.

4.1.1 Novo Nordisk

From Novo Nordisk, data was gathered from executive's messages in two reports, the annual report 2010 and the integrated report 2015.

Despite the integrated reporting framework not existing yet, Novo Nordisk published only one report in 2010, including financial and non-financial information. The report has two messages from executives: a letter from the Chairman on page 2 and a letter from the CEO on page 3. In 2015, Novo Nordisk again published only one report. The report has two

messages from executives: a letter from the Chairman on page 1 and a letter from the CEO on pages 2-3.

The first aspect to be studied was the topic of the message. The number of times each sustainability topic was mentioned in Novo Nordisk's executive's messages is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Sustainability topics in Novo Nordisk's communications

	<i>economic</i>	<i>social</i>	<i>environmental</i>	<i>sustainability</i>
<i>2010 Annual report</i>	14	7	5	0
<i>2015 Annual report</i>	18	7	0	0

As can be seen from Table 4, the biggest changes from 2010 to 2015 in the sustainability topics were an increase in economic mentions and the loss of environmental mentions. There were no mentions of general sustainability topics.

From these findings, certain interpretations in regards to the use of fit tactic could be made. Novo Nordisk operates in the pharmaceutical business, producing for example diabetes medicine. As its products affect the lives of people, its business can be considered to have a stronger social than environmental link. The environmental issues were not communicated at all after the adoption of integrated reporting. In addition, the social issues that were communicated, were strongly related to diabetes care, in the form of patient organization donations or own initiatives. As an example, Novo Nordisk states, "In 2014, we launched Cities Changing Diabetes – a partnership programme to identify and address the root causes of type 2 diabetes in major cities around the world." All of this suggests that Novo Nordisk has decided to align its sustainability communications with the fit tactic after the adoption of integrated reporting, by focusing on communicating only social issues that are closely linked to its business.

The second thing to be studied was the use of descriptive and quantitative information in the executive's messages. These occurrences are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Descriptive and quantitative information in Novo Nordisk's communications

	2010		2015	
	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>
<i>economic</i>	5	9	6	12
<i>social</i>	6	1	7	0
<i>environmental</i>	4	1	0	0
<i>general sustainability</i>	0	0	0	0

As Table 5 shows, in 2010, majority of the economic mentions were communicated with quantitative information, such as the amount of dividends paid. From social and environmental topics, only one thing from each was communicated with quantitative information. In 2015, again, the majority of the economic information is given with quantitative information. All social topics, on the other hand, are discussed only with descriptive, qualitative information. This means that after integrated reporting, Novo Nordisk does not give quantitative information for other than economic topics in the executive's messages.

The third thing studied was whether and how the sustainability communications reflected integrated thinking. In Novo Nordisk's case, signs of integrated thinking can be seen already in its 2010 executive's messages. Novo Nordisk states, "... we are continuing to manage our business in a responsible and sustainable way, with a focus not only on improving the company's finances but also on improving our social and environmental performance." Here Novo Nordisk highlights that performance is not measured only with financial terms, but also with social and environmental terms. Novo Nordisk continued along this way in 2015 by saying, "The fact is that if our pipeline does not progress well, if we fail to discover and develop new, innovative products for people with diabetes and other serious chronic conditions, then we will not be successful in the long term." Here, the social sustainability is clearly linked into Novo Nordisk's business success.

4.1.2 EnBW

From EnBW, data was gathered from executive's messages in three reports; the annual report 2010, the sustainability report 2010, and the integrated report 2015.

The annual report 2010 includes one executive's message from the CEO, on pages 4-8. The letter is addressed to the "shareholders, investors and friends of EnBW". The sustainability report 2010 includes one executive's message from the CEO, on pages 4-5. This is addressed to the "dear reader". EnBW stopped publishing a separate sustainability report after the adoption of integrated thinking, thus, in 2015; EnBW published only one integrated report. The report includes one executive's message from the CEO, on pages 6-7. The message is again addressed to the shareholders, employees and friends of EnBW.

The first aspect to be studied was the number of different sustainability topic occurrences in the executive's messages. The number of times each sustainability topic was mentioned is summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Sustainability topics in EnBW' communications

	<i>economic</i>	<i>social</i>	<i>environmental</i>	<i>sustainability</i>
<i>2010 Annual report</i>	26	0	13	0
<i>2010 Sustainability report</i>	3	10	21	5
<i>2015 Integrated report</i>	8	1	5	0

As Table 6 shows, in the executive's message in annual report 2010, economic sustainability was mentioned 26 times and environmental sustainability 13 times. Social sustainability or general sustainability were not mentioned at all. In the sustainability report 2010 on the other hand, economic sustainability was mentioned only three times, social sustainability 10 times, environmental sustainability 21 times and general sustainability five times. This means that in total in 2010, economic sustainability got 29 mentions and environmental 34 mentions, which means that the environmental mentions actually surpassed the economic mentions. However, in 2015, economic sustainability got eight mentions, environmental sustainability five mentions, and social sustainability only one mention. This means that in 2015, the

environmental mentions accounted for only about half of the number of mentions the economic aspect had. Social sustainability mentions went from 10 to one. It seems that with integrated reporting, a number of social and environmental mentions disappeared from the executive's message. In addition, no general sustainability references were made in 2015. The occurrences of sustainability topics in the integrated report are very similar to those of the annual report 2010, not the sustainability report 2010.

Use of the fit tactic could be identified also in EnBW's communications. EnBW operates in the energy business, meaning that the environment is closely linked to everything it does. EnBW communicates much more about its environmental sustainability than its social sustainability. In addition, the environmental topics are mostly related to renewable energy that makes an obvious connection to its line of business, for example, "Our second offshore wind farm EnBW Baltic 2 was fully connected to the grid in September." Thus, it can be said that the fit tactic can be seen in EnBW's in the sustainability communications in the executive's message.

The second thing to be studied was the use of descriptive and quantitative information in the executive's message. The number of descriptive and quantitative occurrences are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Descriptive and quantitative information in EnBW's communications

	2010		2015	
	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>
<i>economic</i>	13	16	4	4
<i>social</i>	10	0	1	0
<i>environmental</i>	32	2	5	0
<i>general sustainability</i>	5	0	0	0

As can be seen from Table 7, in executive's messages in 2010, EnBW used quantitative information when discussing economic and environmental topics; however, economic information was mostly quantitative, whereas environmental information was mostly

descriptive. In 2015, on the other hand, only economic topics were communicated with quantitative information.

The third thing studied was whether and how the sustainability communications reflected integrated thinking. In EnBW's 2010 communications, there is one sentence that could be considered to reflect integrated thinking, "And this is why we will continue to measure our performance by three core benchmarks: safety for the local population, cost efficiency for the customer and sustainability for society." Here EnBW states that performance is not measured only in financial terms. In 2015 on the other hand, there is no clear communication of integrated thinking.

4.1.3 Generali

From Generali, data was gathered from executive's messages in four reports; the annual report 2010, the sustainability report 2010, the integrated report 2015, and the sustainability report 2015.

Generali's annual report 2010 has no message from an executive in the pdf version. Nonetheless, a message from the CEO is included in the online version of the report, and that has been analyzed. Generali's sustainability report 2010 includes one executive's message from the Chairman on page 3. The integrated report 2015 includes one executive's message from the CEO and the Chairman, on pages 8-9. Despite starting integrated reporting, Generali has decided to keep publishing separate sustainability reports as well. The sustainability report 2015 includes one executive's message from the CEO and the Chairman, on pages 6-7. None of these executive's messages are addressed to any stakeholder group in particular.

The first thing to be studied from the executive's messages was the number of different sustainability topic occurrences. The number of times each sustainability topic was mentioned in Generali's communications is summarized in Table 8.

Table 8: Sustainability topics in Generali's communications

	<i>economic</i>	<i>social</i>	<i>environmental</i>	<i>sustainability</i>
<i>2010 Annual report</i>	2	0	0	0
<i>2010 Sustainability report</i>	8	7	8	4
<i>2015 Integrated report</i>	9	3	0	0
<i>2015 Sustainability report</i>	0	5	2	3

Let us first look at the changes between the annual report 2010 and the integrated report 2015. As can be seen from Table 8, in the executive's message in the annual report 2010, economic responsibility was the only one mentioned. In the integrated report 2015, however, also social sustainability was communicated with three mentions. However, the economic topics received more attention with nine mentions.

There are some differences between the two sustainability reports as well, as can be seen from Table 8. Economic sustainability was left out of the executive's message in the sustainability report 2015. In addition, the relationship of social and environmental mentions is very different in 2015 as compared to 2010: in 2010, environmental sustainability was communicated a bit more than social sustainability; however, in 2015, social sustainability was communicated much more than environmental sustainability.

This suggests that Generali also utilizes the fit tactic in its sustainability communications. Generali's business as an insurer is strongly connected to the society. Generali also acknowledges this in the sustainability report 2015 by stating, "And our line of business can be summed up by the Generali Group vision: protect and improve people's lives". Generali communicates its social sustainability more than its environmental sustainability in its 2015 executive's messages. Thus, it can be said that Generali is using the fit tactic after the adoption of integrated reporting.

The second thing to be studied was the use of descriptive and quantitative information in the executive's messages. The number of descriptive and quantitative occurrences are summarized in Table 9.

Table 9: Descriptive and quantitative information in Generali's communications

	2010		2015	
	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>
<i>economic</i>	9	1	5	4
<i>social</i>	7	0	8	0
<i>environmental</i>	7	1	2	0
<i>general sustainability</i>	4	0	3	0

As Table 9 shows, in 2010, quantitative information was provided of economic and environmental topics. In 2015 on the other hand, quantitative information is given only of economic topics.

The third thing that was studied was how the company showed integrated thinking in the executive's messages. In Generali's 2010 communications, no clear signs of integrated thinking could be identified. In 2015, on the other hand, Generali says,

“The role of an insurance group is now even more focused on contributing to growth, development and society's welfare, pursuing the goal of sustainability in terms of business and finance from a social responsibility angle and thus looking at things with the long-term perspective, envisioning the future and well-being of the generations to come.”

This type of statement can be understood as integrated thinking in practice.

4.1.4 BAM

From BAM, data was gathered from executive's messages in three reports; the annual report 2010, the sustainability report 2010, and the integrated report 2015.

BAM's annual report from 2010 includes one executive's message from the CEO on page 3. BAM's sustainability report from 2010 also includes one executive's message, this time from the Executive Board, including the CEO, on pages 3-5. After starting integrated reporting, BAM stopped publishing separate sustainability reports. The integrated report from 2015 includes one executive's message, again from the CEO, on page 5. None of these executive's messages were addressed to any particular stakeholder groups.

The first thing that was studied in the executive's messages was the occurrences of economic, social, environmental and general sustainability mentions. These findings are shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Sustainability topics in BAM's communications

	<i>economic</i>	<i>social</i>	<i>environmental</i>	<i>sustainability</i>
<i>2010 Annual report</i>	8	2	2	1
<i>2010 Sustainability report</i>	4	5	7	14
<i>2015 Integrated report</i>	12	5	1	1

As can be seen in Table 10, some changes happened in BAM's sustainability communications from 2010 to 2015. In the executive's message in the annual report 2010, the economic aspect prevailed over social, environmental and general sustainability. In the sustainability report 2010 it was almost the other way around, as general sustainability topics were mentioned the most often, followed by environmental and social, with economic topics having the least amount of mentions. Interestingly, in the integrated report 2015, on the other hand, economic topics again prevailed over social sustainability, whereas environmental and general sustainability topics were barely mentioned. This indicates that the integrated report follows the communication style of the annual report 2010, where economic sustainability prevails above others.

Unlike the previous three cases, no indication of the fit tactic could be found in BAM's executive's messages. BAM operates in the construction business. As this business poses great strain on the environment, construction can be considered as an environmentally sensitive industry. In 2010, environmental sustainability was communicated a bit more than social sustainability. However, in 2015, there was only one environmental mention and five social mentions. This suggests that the company does not utilize the fit tactic in its communications, even after the adoption of integrated reporting.

The second thing to be studied was the use of descriptive and quantitative information when communicating different sustainability topics in the executive's messages. The observations related to this are summarized in Table 11.

Table 11: Descriptive and quantitative information in BAM's communications

	2010		2015	
	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>
<i>economic</i>	9	3	11	1
<i>social</i>	7	0	4	1
<i>environmental</i>	9	0	0	1
<i>general sustainability</i>	15	0	1	0

Table 11 shows that in the executive's messages in 2010, BAM communicated only economic messages with quantitative information. In 2015, on the other hand, economic, social and environmental topics were all communicated with quantitative information, one time each.

The third thing to be studied was the indication of integrated thinking in the sustainability communications. BAM's communications already in its executive's message in the sustainability report 2010 hint towards integrated reporting, "... for BAM sustainability has now become an inseparable aspect of business operations". However, soon after this comes the statement, "Whereas the financial annual report is primarily about added value, this sustainability report focuses mainly on people and the environment." This sentence suggests that added value can only be generated in financial terms, and this understanding is not supported by the definition of integrated thinking. Thus, it can be said that BAM's communications from 2010 do not represent integrated thinking. In addition, no inferences of integrated thinking could be made from its 2015 communications either.

4.1.5 Rosneft

From Rosneft, data was gathered from executive's messages in four reports; the annual report 2010, the sustainability report 2010, the integrated report 2015, and the sustainability report 2015.

Rosneft's annual report 2010 includes two messages from executives: the Chairman's message on pages 4-6 and the CEO's message on pages 8-10. Both messages are addressed to shareholders. Rosneft's sustainability report 2010 has again two messages from executives: the Chairman's message on pages 6-7 and the CEO's message on pages 8-9. These messages are not addressed to any reader group in particular. The integrated report 2015 yet again includes two messages from executives: the Chairman's message on pages 6-7 and the CEO's message on pages 8-9. Both messages are again addressed to the shareholders. Despite starting integrated reporting, Rosneft still publishes separate sustainability reports. The sustainability report 2015 has also two messages from the same executives: the Chairman's message on pages 2-3 and the CEO's message on pages 4-5. Again, the messages in the sustainability report are not addressed to any particular stakeholder or reader group.

The first thing to be studied was the occurrence of the economic, social, environmental and general sustainability topics in the executive's messages. These findings are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12: Sustainability topics in Rosneft's communications

	<i>economic</i>	<i>social</i>	<i>environmental</i>	<i>sustainability</i>
<i>2010 Annual report</i>	16	3	4	0
<i>2010 Sustainability report</i>	3	13	12	2
<i>2015 Integrated report</i>	15	8	1	0
<i>2015 Sustainability report</i>	4	19	12	2

Let us first look at the changes between the executive's messages in the annual report and integrated report. As Table 12 shows, the number of economic mentions has stayed

approximately the same. The difference between social and environmental mentions on the other hand has changed. In the annual report 2010, environmental and social messages received almost the same amount of mentions, whereas in integrated report 2015, the social messages overrule the environmental messages by far. In regards to the executive's messages in the sustainability reports from 2010 and 2015, the only notable differences are an increase in social sustainability mentions, and a slight increase in economic mentions.

Like in BAM's case, no use of an overarching fit tactic can be seen in Rosneft's social and environmental sustainability communications in the executive's messages. Rosneft operates in the oil and gas industry, which is considered as an environmentally sensitive industry due to its negative environmental impact. However, Rosneft does not emphasize its environmental sustainability over social sustainability. In fact, in 2015, social sustainability gets much more attention than environmental sustainability. This means that Rosneft is not utilizing the fit tactic in the same way as some of the other companies.

The second thing studied was the use of descriptive and quantitative information in the executive's messages. These findings are shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Descriptive and quantitative information in Rosneft's communications

	2010		2015	
	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>
<i>economic</i>	12	7	13	6
<i>social</i>	11	5	20	7
<i>environmental</i>	13	3	10	3
<i>general sustainability</i>	2	0	2	0

Table 13 shows that in the executive's messages in 2010, Rosneft communicated its economic, social and environmental sustainability with both qualitative and quantitative information. This is the case also in 2015, thus no significant changes can be observed.

The third thing that was studied was how the companies show integrated thinking in the executive's messages. In 2010, Rosneft does not strongly indicate integrated thinking. In its

2015 communications on the other hand, it states, “The Company’s management has followed a balanced approach in its investment, operating, financial and social policy.” This statement can be considered as an example of integrated thinking.

4.1.6 Telefónica

From Telefónica, data was gathered from executive’s messages in three reports; the annual report 2010, the sustainability report 2010, and the integrated report 2015.

Telefonica’s annual report 2010 has one message from the CEO, on pages 6-9. It is addressed to the shareholders. The sustainability report 2010 also includes one letter from the CEO, on pages 4-5. This message is addressed to “dear friends”. The integrated report 2015 has one message from the CEO, on pages 3-6. This message is again addressed to the shareholders.

The first thing that was studied in the executive’s messages were the occurrences of different sustainability topics. A summary of these findings is provided in Table 14.

Table 14: Sustainability topics in Telefónica’s communications

	<i>economic</i>	<i>social</i>	<i>environmental</i>	<i>sustainability</i>
<i>2010 Annual report</i>	30	3	0	2
<i>2010 Sustainability report</i>	1	4	4	14
<i>2015 Integrated report</i>	25	7	0	4

As Table 14 shows, in the executive’s message in the annual report 2010, economic messages prevailed greatly over social and general sustainability mentions, with no communication of environmental sustainability. In the executive’s message in the sustainability report 2010 on the other hand, the general sustainability mentions overruled, and social and environmental mentions were tied. Economic messages got the least amount of mentions. When looking at the changes to the integrated report 2015, it is noticeable that the sustainability mentions are divided similarly as in the annual report 2010: economic mentions prevail over social and general sustainability mentions. In addition, environmental messages are nowhere to be seen. The number of general sustainability mentions has decreased by a lot from the sustainability report. Overall, the style of communications in the executive’s messages in the integrated

report 2015 greatly resemble the communication style of the executive's messages in the annual report 2010.

The findings above indicate the use of corporate fit tactic. As a telecommunications company, Telefónica's business is not related to the environment, but to the society. Telefónica highlights its social sustainability more than environmental sustainability already in 2010, but even more in 2015, when environmental sustainability is not mentioned at all. This leads to the understanding that Telefónica is utilizing the fit tactic in its sustainability communications, especially so after the adoption of integrated reporting.

The second thing to be studied was how companies use quantitative and descriptive information when communicating different sustainability topics in the executive's messages. These findings can be seen in Table 15.

Table 15: Descriptive and quantitative information in Telefónica's communications

	2010		2015	
	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>
<i>economic</i>	11	20	11	14
<i>social</i>	6	1	7	0
<i>environmental</i>	3	1	0	0
<i>general sustainability</i>	16	0	4	0

Table 15 shows that in the executive's messages in 2010, Telefónica communicated economic sustainability mostly with quantitative information. Social sustainability and environmental sustainability were also communicated with both qualitative and quantitative information. In 2015 on the other hand, quantitative information was given only from economic topics.

The third thing to be studied was how the communications in the executive's messages reflect integrated thinking. In 2010, Telefónica made some statements that can be considered as displaying integrated thinking, such as, "...sustainability and corporate responsibility are

important parts of our strategy.” No statements from 2015 on the other hand could be understood as integrated thinking.

4.1.7 Marks and Spencer

From Marks and Spencer, data was gathered from executive’s messages in four reports: the annual report 2010, the sustainability report 2010, the integrated report 2015, and the sustainability report 2015. Marks and Spencer differs from the other companies in that its sustainability reports are the only ones without the word “sustainability” in the title. Its sustainability reports from 2010 and 2015 are titled the “How we do business report” and the “Plan A report”, respectively.

The annual report 2010 includes one message from the Chairman on pages 1-7 and one short message from the CEO on page 7. The sustainability report 2010 also has one message from the Chairman on page 1 and one short message from the CEO on page 1. The integrated report 2015 includes one message from the Chairman on pages 4-5 and one message from the CEO on pages 8-9. The sustainability report 2015 has a message from the CEO on page 1, but no message from the Chairman. None of the messages from Marks and Spencer is addressed to any particular reader.

The first thing that was studied was again the number of times the different sustainability topics were mentioned in the executive’s messages. These findings are summarized in Table 16.

Table 16: Sustainability topics in Marks and Spencer’s communications

	<i>economic</i>	<i>social</i>	<i>environmental</i>	<i>sustainability</i>
<i>2010 Annual report</i>	28	6	4	7
<i>2010 Sustainability report</i>	1	3	2	9
<i>2015 Integrated report</i>	39	6	0	7
<i>2015 Sustainability report</i>	0	4	2	8

Let us first look at the differences between the executive’s messages in the annual report 2010 and the integrated report 2015. As Table 16 shows, the division of sustainability topics

in the annual report 2010 is similar to that of the integrated report 2015: economic mentions prevail, followed by general sustainability and social mentions. The only differences are an increase in economic mentions and the loss of environmental mentions.

In regards to the executive's messages in the sustainability reports 2010 and 2015, on the other hand, no big changes can be identified; only economic sustainability is not mentioned at all in the sustainability report 2015. Interestingly, in Marks and Spencer's case, the number of general sustainability mentions is greater than that of social or environmental mentions. This suggests that instead of communicating specific sustainability issues or performance, Marks and Spencer focuses on communicating their general attitude to sustainability in the executive's messages.

The findings in Table 17 indicate that Marks and Spencer is using the corporate fit tactic. Marks and Spencer is a retail company, selling for example clothes and food to the public, thus its business can be considered strongly related to the society. In the executive's messages 2010, it communicated approximately the same amount of social and environmental topics, however by 2015, there were much more social than environmental topics presented. This suggests that Marks and Spencer is using the fit tactic in its communications, especially after the adoption of integrated reporting.

The second thing that was studied was the use of descriptive and quantitative information when communicating sustainability in the executive's messages. The findings to this are depicted in Table 17.

Table 17: Descriptive and quantitative information in Marks and Spencer's communications

	2010		2015	
	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>	<i>descriptive</i>	<i>quantitative</i>
<i>economic</i>	12	17	27	12
<i>social</i>	7	2	9	1
<i>environmental</i>	5	1	2	0
<i>general sustainability</i>	10	6	14	1

As Table 17 shows, in executive's messages from 2010, Marks and Spencer communicated all aspects of sustainability with quantitative and descriptive information. However, with social, environmental and general sustainability, most of the information was descriptive, not quantitative, whereas most economic information was quantitative. In 2015, the biggest change was that no quantitative information was given from environmental topics.

The third thing that was studied was how the companies communicate integrated thinking in their communications. Marks and Spencer showed integrated thinking in the executive's messages already in 2010 with many statements where they discuss Plan A, their sustainability program. For example,

“Since its launch in 2007, we have moved from the implementation of Plan A to making it the key driver of how we do business. In doing so, we have become more efficient and in 2009/10 alone Plan A generated £50m additional profit, which has been invested back into the business.”

In 2015, Marks and Spencer still communicates integrated thinking by stating for example, “We launched Plan A 2020, which reflects our determination to put sustainability at the heart of our brand and corporate strategy”.

4.2 Shared patterns

Now that the detailed descriptions of each case have been given, it is time to present the other set of findings: the common patterns found in the seven cases. These findings are based on the case descriptions provided in the previous subchapter. There were four key findings, which are briefly introduced next, with more elaborate descriptions given in the following four sections. It is worthwhile repeating that the findings were derived only from the executive's messages, thus the analysis did not cover the entire corporate reports.

First, the sustainability communications in the integrated reports resemble a great deal the sustainability communications in the earlier annual reports. This means that the number of economic, social, environmental and general sustainability messages stays approximately the same from the executive's message in the annual report to the executive's message in the

integrated report. This means that in integrated reports, as well as annual reports, economic mentions are the most popular ones, whereas social, environmental and general sustainability topics have much less attention, if any, depending on the company.

Second, after adopting integrated reporting, the companies used the corporate fit tactic when communicating social and environmental topics in the executive's messages more than before. Five out of seven companies were using the fit tactic after the adoption of integrated reporting. Out of these five companies, only two companies could be identified to be using the fit tactic already before integrated reporting. There were only two companies not using the corporate fit even after adopting integrated reporting.

Third, the executive's messages did not contain more quantitative information when communicating social, environmental or general sustainability after adopting integrated reporting. Four of the seven companies gave quantitative information only about economic topics even after starting integrated reporting. Three companies on the other hand gave quantitative information about social, environmental or general sustainability topics in addition to the quantitative economic information after integrated reporting. Out of these three companies, two had given quantitative information about these topics already before integrated reporting, thus in fact, only one out of seven companies started to do so after integrated reporting.

Fourth, all companies did not show integrated thinking in the executive's messages. As mentioned, three companies had decided to physically combine their annual and sustainability reports into one integrated report, and not publish a separate sustainability report anymore. Interestingly, despite combining the reports, these three companies showed no signs of integrated thinking in their communications after starting integrated reporting, even though some of them did so before integrated reporting. The four companies who kept the number of reports the same all showed integrated thinking in 2015. Two of these four companies had showed integrated thinking in their communications already before integrated reporting; however, two did so only after integrated reporting. Thus, only two out of seven

companies started showing integrated thinking in their communications because of integrated reporting. These four patterns are now presented more thoroughly.

4.2.1 Integrated reports resemble annual reports

As was mentioned, the first finding was that in terms of sustainability communications, the executive's messages in integrated reports from 2015 resemble the executive's messages in annual reports from 2010, not the executive's messages in sustainability reports from 2010. In all annual reports' executive's messages, economic mentions were the most prevalent ones, surpassing social, environmental, and general sustainability mentions, whereas in sustainability reports' executive's messages, the social, environmental or general sustainability mentions always prevailed over the economic ones. In integrated reports' executive's messages, the economic mentions again surpassed the number of social, environmental and general sustainability mentions.

This was true in all cases, despite of whether the company combined their annual report with sustainability report to make one integrated report, or decided to publish a separate sustainability report even after integrated reporting. EnBW, BAM and Telefónica decided not to publish a separate sustainability report anymore in 2015, but only one integrated report. Generali, Rosneft, and Marks and Spencer decided to keep publishing a separate sustainability report in addition to the integrated report. Novo Nordisk was publishing only one report already before the integrated reporting framework, and it decided to continue that way also after adopting the framework.

In addition, it was noted that often, the executive's messages in annual reports and integrated reports were addressed to shareholders, whereas most of the sustainability reports, whether 2010 or 2015, were not addressed to any stakeholder group in particular. This also supports the view that integrated reports follow the pattern of the annual reports.

4.2.2 Fit tactic was used more after adopting integrated reporting

Two patterns were identified in relation to the fit tactic in the executive's messages: companies that use the fit tactic after adopting integrated reporting, and companies that do

not. Five companies out of seven, Novo Nordisk, EnBW, Generali, Telefónica, and Marks and Spencer, seemed to highlight that aspect of sustainability, either social or environmental, that is more closely related to their line of business. For Novo Nordisk, Generali, Telefónica, and Marks and Spencer, the social sustainability is more closely related to their business than the environmental sustainability. These companies operate in the pharmaceutical, financial services, telecommunications and retail industries, which have no strong connection to the environment, however a strong connection to the society. For EnBW on the other hand, the environmental sustainability is more closely related to their field of business, electric utility, than social sustainability.

A clear change in the use of fit tactic can be seen in Novo Nordisk, Generali, and Marks and Spencer's communications after the adoption of integrated reporting. In 2010, before integrated reporting, there was no clear indication that the companies would highlight that one aspect of sustainability that better suited their business in their executive's messages. This suggests that these three companies started using the fit tactic after adopting integrated reporting. For example, Novo Nordisk still had five environmental mentions in its 2010 executive's messages, but none in 2015. Generali communicated social and environmental approximately as much in 2010, but in 2015, environmental mentions accounted for only one fourth of the social mentions. The same applies to Marks and Spencer. In 2010, social and environmental topics got the same amount of mentions, however in 2015, environmental mentions accounted for only one fifth of the social mentions.

In the executive's messages of EnBW and Telefónica on the other hand, some signs of the fit tactic can be seen already in 2010. However, after integrated reporting, the use of fit tactic became even more obvious. For example, in 2010, ENBW communicated social sustainability about one third as much as environmental sustainability, however, in 2015 only about one fifth. This indicates an even stronger emphasis of environmental sustainability in 2015. The same is true for Telefónica as well. In 2010, it communicated environmental sustainability half as much as social sustainability, however in 2015, environmental sustainability was not communicated at all.

Two companies, BAM and Rosneft, seem not to be using the fit tactic in their executive's messages. BAM operates in the construction industry and Rosneft in the oil and gas industry. Hence, both businesses are related strongly to the environment. Both of these companies communicated much more about their social sustainability than environmental sustainability. In fact, a change in that direction happened after integrated reporting. In 2010, Rosneft communicated social and environmental sustainability equally; however, in 2015, a clear focus can be seen on social sustainability. The same can be seen in BAM's communications: in 2010, environmental topics actually received a bit more attention than social, however in 2015, environmental mentions accounted for only one fifth of social mentions. This means that instead of using the fit tactic, both companies are using the opposite: focusing on that aspect that is further away from their business. Potential reasons for this are discussed in Chapter 5.

4.2.3 Companies provide more financial than non-financial quantitative information both before and after integrated reporting

From the findings, it became apparent that integrated reporting did not increase the use of non-financial quantitative information in the executive's messages within the case companies.

For the most part, only economic topics were communicated with quantitative information, whereas social, environmental and general sustainability topics were mostly communicated with non-quantitative, descriptive information. Four companies provided quantitative information only about economic topics after the adoption of integrated reporting. Three companies gave also non-financial quantitative information after integrated reporting.

Novo Nordisk, EnBW, Generali and Telefónica communicated only economic topics with quantitative information in the executive's messages from 2015, even though they had communicated also social, environmental or general sustainability topics with quantitative information in their previous executive's messages.

BAM, Rosneft, and Marks and Spencer provided quantitative information also about social, environmental or general sustainability topics in their executive's messages from 2015, and not just economic topics. For Rosneft, and Marks and Spencer, this was already the case in 2010, as Rosneft gave quantitative information about economic, social and environmental topics, and Marks and Spencer about general sustainability as well. BAM was the only company who in 2010 gave quantitative information about only economic topics, but in 2015 also about social and environmental topics.

4.2.4 Communicating integrated thinking after integrated reporting

As mentioned, not all case companies showed integrated thinking in their executive's messages despite starting integrated reporting. In fact, three companies did not show integrated thinking in 2015, whereas four companies did.

EnBW, BAM and Telefónica were those companies who did not demonstrate integrated thinking in their 2015 communications. Interestingly, these three were also the same companies who decided to combine their reports and publish only one integrated report, and no separate sustainability report. This suggests that integrated thinking does not simply happen by combining the reports. Another interesting thing to note is that two of these companies, EnBW and Telefónica, showed integrated thinking in their communications in 2010, but not in 2015. In 2010, EnBW communicated integrated thinking by stating, "... we will continue to measure our performance by three core benchmarks: safety for the local population, cost efficiency for the customer and sustainability for society." Telefónica on the other hand said, "... sustainability and corporate responsibility are important parts of our strategy."

The four companies who did show integrated thinking in their executive's messages in 2015 were Novo Nordisk, Generali, Rosneft, and Marks and Spencer. Interestingly, these companies were also those who decided to keep the number of corporate reports the same. Two of these four companies had showed integrated thinking in their communications already in 2010 before integrated reporting; however, two did so only after integrated

reporting. Thus, only two out of seven companies started showing integrated thinking in their communications because of integrated reporting.

Generali and Rosneft were the ones who started showing integrated thinking in their executive's messages only in 2015 after the adoption of integrated reporting. Generali then stated, "The role of an insurance group is now even more focused on contributing to growth, development and society's welfare, pursuing the goal of sustainability in terms of business and finance from a social responsibility angle ..." Rosneft on the other hand said, "The Company's management has followed a balanced approach in its investment, operating, financial and social policy."

Novo Nordisk, and Marks and Spencer, were the only two companies whose communications in executive's messages reflected integrated thinking already in 2010, but also in 2015. In 2010, Novo Nordisk stated, "... we are continuing to manage our business in a responsible and sustainable way, with a focus not only on improving the company's finances but also on improving our social and environmental performance." In 2015, it continued along the same lines by stating, "...if our pipeline does not progress well, if we fail to discover and develop new, innovative products for people with diabetes and other serious chronic conditions, then we will not be successful in the long term."

Marks and Spencer communicated integrated thinking in 2010 in many ways, for example by saying, "By further embedding sustainability into the way we do business we will continue to become more efficient, develop new markets and build customer loyalty." This is a textbook example of integrated thinking: stating that sustainability brings business value. In 2015, Marks and Spencer continued along the same lines by saying, "We launched Plan A 2020, which reflects our determination to put sustainability at the heart of our brand and corporate strategy." This is yet another good example of integrated thinking in practice: sustainability embedded into the strategy.

Now that the shared pattern findings have been presented, the key findings will be summarized.

4.3 Summary of the key findings

As has been made clear, the purpose of the study was to find insights to two research questions. The first research question was “how do companies communicate sustainability in their corporate reports before and after integrated reporting”. The findings indicate that companies communicate sustainability quite similarly before and after integrated reporting.

First, the executive’s messages in integrated reports resemble those of the annual reports. It was noted that in the executive’s messages of sustainability reports, whether in 2010 or 2015, social, environmental and general sustainability topics were communicated more than economic topics. In the executive’s messages from the annual reports 2010 and integrated reports 2015 on the other hand, the number of economic messages always prevailed over the number of social, environmental or general sustainability topics. Thus, the integrated reports resemble more the annual reports than the sustainability reports. This means that those companies, who stopped publishing a separate sustainability report after integrated reporting, lost a great number of social, environmental and general sustainability mentions in their executive’s messages. Companies that continued to publish a separate sustainability report did not face this, as their sustainability reports still contained the social, environmental and general sustainability mentions.

Second, the findings suggest that after integrated reporting, companies use the fit tactic more when deciding which social or environmental topics to communicate in the executive’s messages. After the adoption of integrated reporting, five out of seven companies used the corporate fit tactic when communicating social and environmental topics. Two of these companies had been using the fit tactic to some extent already before, however; it increased even more after integrated reporting. Only two companies, who operate in environmentally sensitive industries, construction and oil and gas, did not use the fit tactic after integrated reporting. These companies chose to focus their communications on social sustainability instead of environmental sustainability, despite the natural fit their business has with the environment.

Third, it became clear that in the executive's messages, companies provide more quantitative financial data than quantitative non-financial data, both before and after integrated reporting. Four companies communicated only economic topics with quantitative information in 2015. Three companies communicated also social, environmental or general sustainability topics with quantitative information after adopting integrated reporting. However, two of these three companies had done so already before integrated reporting. Thus, only one company started providing quantitative data for non-financial information in their executive's messages after integrated reporting.

The second research question was "how do companies communicate integrated thinking in their corporate reports after the adoption of integrated reporting". It was revealed that not all companies communicate integrated thinking even after the adoption of integrated reporting. Signs of integrated thinking could be seen only in four companies' executive's messages in 2015. The other three companies showed no integrated thinking in 2015, although some of them had done so in 2010. In fact, these three companies were those who had combined the sustainability and annual reports into one integrated report. This shows that combining the two reports does not necessarily lead to integrated thinking. The companies communicated their integrated thinking in many ways. Most involved stating how sustainability is a key part of their business or strategy.

This chapter has presented the findings. In the next chapter, these findings shall be discussed in relation to existing literature.

5 Discussion

To recall, this study's objective was to explore how integrated reporting changes a company's sustainability communications, and how integrated reporting can be seen in the communications. In this chapter, the findings are discussed in relation to existing literature within the theoretical framework. Findings related to the first research question are discussed first.

Earlier research shows that after joining integrated reporting, companies publish less corporate reports (Havlová, 2015, p. 235). This study supports these findings, as three of the seven companies stopped publishing a separate sustainability report once they had adopted the integrated reporting framework. In addition, the findings from this study contribute to the earlier research by exploring in more depth what the effects of deleting the sustainability report were. The content of the executive's messages in the integrated reports was very similar to those in the earlier annual reports, meaning that most focus was put on economic topics. This means that for companies who decided to stop publishing separate sustainability reports, it was as if the entire sustainability report had vanished, thus losing many social and environmental messages.

The triple bottom line definition for sustainability acknowledges economic, social and environmental dimensions as all a part of sustainability. However, based on the findings, it seems that in practice, many companies keep social and environmental sustainability separate from their financial responsibility, even after adopting integrated reporting. Out of the seven case companies, three still published a separate sustainability report that focused on social and environmental aspects, not economic ones. In addition, all companies used much more quantitative information when communicating economic topics than social or environmental topics in their executive's messages. However, Dahlsrud (2008, p. 6) suggests that the core in sustainability is that companies should decide themselves what it means for them. The fact that social and environmental sustainability are communicated differently than economic sustainability indicates that for these companies, sustainability means social and environmental issues, not the economic responsibility of the company.

The sustainability topics that the case companies communicated included most of the social issues that Carroll (1979) set forth in the 70s: consumerism, environment, product safety, occupational safety, and shareholders were all communicated in the corporate reports. This shows that the sustainability topics have not changed drastically even in the last almost 40 years.

Most of the information given in the executive's messages was informational, so they could be considered as stakeholder information strategy (Morsing & Schultz, 2006). However, in some instances the entire message could be considered as stakeholder response strategy as well (Morsing & Schultz, 2006). As mentioned, many companies addressed their executive's messages in annual and integrated reports to the shareholders. In addition, these messages included plenty of financial information, including the amount of dividend that will be paid to the shareholders. The amount of dividend can be considered as something that the shareholders have requested, so potentially this could be considered as stakeholder response strategy as well. Both of these strategies were originally created to analyze communications about ethics and social responsibility; however, they could be applied to communications about economic sustainability as well.

The findings from the study show that most of the companies utilized the fit tactic (Du et al. 2010) in their executive's messages after the adoption of integrated reporting by focusing their non-financial sustainability communications either on social or environmental sustainability, depending on which aspect was more closely linked to their business. This finding is against the recommendation of Villagra et al. (2016) to move from corporate fit to stakeholder fit. However, two companies, BAM and Rosneft, did not do so. Both of these companies highlighted their social sustainability in their communications much more than environmental sustainability after the adoption of integrated reporting. Their focus on social over environmental sustainability is so strong that it could be called as a "counter-fit" tactic. Both of these companies operate in environmentally sensitive industries, construction and oil and gas. Research shows that companies that operate in an environmentally sensitive industry tend to provide vaguer information about their environmental efforts, for example place more

focus on communicating sustainability actions than sustainability performance (Stacchezzini et al., 2016, p.7). Thus, the fact that BAM and Rosneft avoid communicating too much about environmental topics, and focus more on the social topics, seems aligned with this statement. In addition, it has been argued that companies may disclose biased information about their sustainability activities in integrated reports by leaving out information that is unfavorable for the company (Stacchezzini et al., 2016, pp. 6-7). This can also be a reason for why companies in environmentally sensitive industries have not focused on their environmental sustainability.

However, a third company, EnBW, also operates in an environmentally sensitive industry, electric utility; but still highlights environmental topics over social topics in its communications, thus uses the fit tactic. The reasons behind this difference are difficult to know for sure; however, some educated guesses can be made based on the findings. Even though EnBW's industry is environmentally sensitive, its business is strongly connected to renewable energy, which was also the key point in its communications. Thus, its business has a positive impact on the environment. Perhaps this is the reason for why EnBW takes pride in discussing its environmental focus, but BAM and Rosneft consider it better to focus on highlighting their positive social impact than the potential negative environmental strain.

Insights to the second research question, how is integrated thinking demonstrated in the communications, were also discovered. According to the findings discovered from the executive's messages, integrated reporting does not always lead to integrated thinking. Only four out of seven companies showed integrated thinking after the adoption of integrated reporting. Generali, Rosneft, Marks and Spencer, and Novo Nordisk were the four companies who showed integrated thinking in their communications. Out of these four companies, three still publish a separate sustainability report. According to Oliver et al. (2016), soft integrated thinking means that sustainability is seen as a part of the big picture, and not as a separate stand-alone activity. The fact that companies still publish separate sustainability reports is opposed to this definition of soft integrated thinking. Novo Nordisk was the only company that communicated integrated thinking after integrated reporting, and did not publish a

separate sustainability report. Thus, only Novo Nordisk demonstrated soft integrated thinking. The fact that only one company out of seven showed soft integrated thinking can be considered a bit worrying, as research shows that potential problems can occur if hard integrated thinking prevails over soft integrated thinking (Oliver et al., 2016, p. 244).

Not all companies demonstrated hard systems integrated thinking either, as they did not provide quantitative information on all aspects of sustainability, which according to Oliver et al. (2016, p. 235-237) is an aspect of hard integrated thinking. BAM and Rosneft were the only companies who in the executive's messages provided quantitative information about all three aspects of sustainability: economic, social and environmental.

Some of the quantitative information provided, for example the amount of dividend or the number of jobs created, can be considered to represent the impact tactic (Du et al., 2010). As companies provide more quantitative economic information than quantitative social or environmental information, it can suggest that the impact tactic is used more when discussing economic performance, and less with social or environmental performance.

In addition to the key findings related to the two research questions, some other interesting details were discovered in the study. As has been stated in the literature review, stakeholder management is a key part of communications. With stakeholder mapping, for example the stakeholder salience model (Mitchell et al., 1997), companies can determine which stakeholder groups are the most important ones for them. Based on the findings, it seems that shareholders are considered the most important stakeholders, because the executive's messages in annual and integrated reports were often addressed to the shareholders. This view is supported by the IIRC's viewpoint that the integrated report is intended mainly for shareholders and investors. This is also supported by Burke and Clark's (2016) findings about the integrated report being especially helpful in improving relations with shareholders and investors. In addition, the messages addressed to the shareholders contained a large number of economic topics, with less social and environmental topics. This suggests that despite the increasing interest in sustainable investing and investors asking for more details on non-financial performance (e.g. Hockerts & Moir, 2004), the assumption often still is that the

shareholders are more interested in the economic performance, and not so much in the non-financial performance.

Interestingly, the findings show that the executive's messages in the sustainability reports were seldom addressed to anyone in particular. This poses the question that do companies know for who they are writing their sustainability reports, if they cannot address them to anyone. There is no clear audience, which hints that appropriate stakeholder mapping has not been done when considering to who they should write the sustainability reports. Searcy and Buslovich (2014) claim that potential reasons companies publish sustainability reports can be internal or external pressure, however if there is no external stakeholder identified, the reason is not likely to be external pressure.

Lastly, out of the nine sustainability reports that were included in this study, only two did not have the word "sustainability" in the title of the report, whereas the other seven did. This is in line with the findings of Gatti and Seele (2014), who found that companies are using more and more the term sustainability when naming these reports.

To summarize, the findings presented and discussed contribute to the academic understanding of how companies' sustainability communications can change with the adoption of integrated reporting. In addition, the findings provide valuable insights about how difficult integrated thinking is to master. The next chapter ends this thesis by providing the conclusions.

6 Conclusions

This chapter concludes this thesis. First, the research gap and research questions, the literature, and the research methods are briefly summed up. After this, the findings are summarized, and practical implications derived from the findings are introduced. In addition, the limitations of the study are presented and suggestions for further research are given.

The purpose of this study was to explore how integrated reporting can change companies' sustainability communications and how companies communicate integrated thinking after adopting integrated reporting. The study was motivated by the fact that existing literature does not address how integrated reporting changes a company's sustainability communications. In addition, current research fails to provide coherent answers to how companies communicate integrated thinking after the adoption of integrated reporting. There were two research questions: how do companies communicate sustainability in their corporate reports before and after integrated reporting, and how do companies communicate integrated thinking in their corporate reports after the adoption of integrated reporting.

The theoretical framework of this study consisted of literature related to stakeholder management, sustainability, sustainability communications, and integrated reporting. Stakeholder management models were the starting point, as understanding stakeholders is the key in communications. The concept of sustainability provided the basis for how sustainability can be defined, and how it is defined in this thesis. Sustainability communications on the other hand provided an understanding on how sustainability can be communicated: which strategies, tactics and tools are used. Lastly, integrated reporting research gave an overview on the existing literature and on the characteristics of the integrated reporting framework. With the help of this theory, an appropriate research approach was developed.

The research method was qualitative content analysis, which was done on CEOs and Chairmen's messages in corporate reports, i.e. annual reports, sustainability reports and integrated reports. The reports studied were from seven European companies, operating in

seven industries. The reports were from the years 2010 and 2015. The companies were selected by using the maximum variation sampling strategy, meaning that all companies were from different industries and countries. This sampling strategy resulted in two kinds of findings, detailed descriptions of each case, as well as descriptions of common patterns in the cases. The results of the study are summarized in the following subchapter.

6.1 Research summary

In regards to the first research question, it was discovered that companies communicate sustainability quite similarly in the executive's messages before and after integrated reporting. It was noted that regardless of whether the companies combine annual reports with sustainability reports to publish one integrated report, or keep publishing the same amount of reports as before, the executive's messages in integrated reports are much more similar to the annual reports than to the sustainability reports. In the sustainability reports' executive's messages, whether in 2010 or 2015, social, environmental and general sustainability topics were communicated more than economic topics. In the executive's messages in annual reports 2010 and integrated reports 2015 on the other hand, the number of economic topics always prevailed over the number of social, environmental or general sustainability topics. This means that for companies who did not publish a separate sustainability report anymore after integrated reporting, a great number of social, environmental and general sustainability messages were lost with the deletion of the sustainability report. For companies that continued to publish a separate sustainability report, this did not happen, as the social, environmental and general sustainability topics were discussed in the sustainability reports.

The findings suggest that integrated reporting increases the use of fit tactic. After the adoption of integrated reporting, five out of seven companies used the corporate fit tactic when communicating social and environmental topics in their executive's messages. Two of these companies had been using the fit tactic to some extent already before, however; it increased even more after integrated reporting. Only two companies, who operate in environmentally sensitive industries, construction and oil and gas, did not use the fit tactic after integrated reporting. These companies chose to focus their communications on social sustainability

instead of environmental sustainability, despite the natural fit their business has with the environment.

It became clear that integrated reporting does not increase the use of non-financial quantitative data in executive's messages. Four companies still communicated only economic topics with quantitative information. Only three companies communicated also social, environmental or general sustainability topics with quantitative information after adopting integrated reporting. However, two of these three companies had done so already before integrated reporting. Thus, only one company started using quantitative data for non-financial information because of integrated reporting.

In regards to the second research question, it was revealed that not all companies communicate integrated thinking even after the adoption of integrated reporting. Signs of integrated thinking could be seen only in four companies' executive's messages in 2015. The other three companies showed no integrated thinking in 2015. These three companies were those who had combined the sustainability and annual reports into one integrated report. The ways the companies communicated their integrated thinking were manifold. Most involved stating how sustainability is a key part of their business or strategy. Thus, based on the findings to the second research question, it cannot be said that integrated reporting would always lead to integrated thinking, or at least not to communicating integrated thinking.

As a similar study as this has not yet been conducted, these findings cannot be compared with earlier ones overall. The findings do have some support from previous studies, as has been discussed in Chapter 5. Moreover, this study provides a number of theoretical contributions that can be studied further. Managerial implications that the findings provide are presented in the next subchapter.

6.2 Managerial implications

As the findings suggest that integrated reports tend to resemble the annual reports in terms of sustainability communications, companies that wish to keep their social and environmental sustainability messages, need to pay special attention to it. Based on these findings, one

solution could be to keep publishing a separate sustainability report, where also the social and environmental topics would get more attention. Another option would be to pay more attention to the integration of social and environmental information with the financial one, so that the economic information does not surpass the others.

As integrated reporting increases the use of fit tactic, companies can potentially benefit from a better-aligned sustainability communications strategy. Integrated reporting could help companies align their sustainability issues better with their business. However, as Stacchezzini et al. (2016) point out, choosing which topics to discuss and which not, might also lead to providing biased sustainability information.

Companies that wish to appear truly sustainable should focus on providing more quantitative information about social and environmental performance. This way they can show that sustainability truly is in their strategy. This is something that should be acknowledged if combining the annual and sustainability reports into one integrated report; economic, social and environmental topics should be balanced in their portrayal.

The findings indicate that achieving integrated thinking is not easy, and it does not happen simply by combining the sustainability and annual reports. Companies that wish to adopt the integrated reporting framework and benefit from integrated thinking need to pay attention to how the social and environmental aspects are actually included in the decision-making of the company.

6.3 Limitations of the study

As always in research, a number of limitations exist for this study and need to be addressed accordingly. These limitations are related to the transferability, credibility and dependability of the study, as described by Lincoln & Guba (1985, as cited in Bryman & Bell, 2003).

First, the fact that the selection of companies for this study was limited to European companies who were a part of the IIRC's Pilot Programme can affect the transferability of the findings. As the study was conducted only on European companies, care should be taken in generalizing the findings to other geographical contexts.

Second, the content analysis was performed only on the CEO's and Chairman's messages in the corporate reports, not the entire reports. This means that some form of communication that is not apparent in the studied messages can still happen in other parts of the report. For example, even if there was no quantitative environmental information in the messages studied here, there can be in some other parts of the report. Thus, this can affect the credibility of the findings.

Third, although common patterns were discovered among the case companies after the adoption of integrated reporting, it should be acknowledged that other factors could potentially affect the change in sustainability communications as well. Thus, it cannot be said with a hundred percent certainty that all the changes identified would derive directly from integrated reporting. This as well can influence the credibility of the study.

Fourth, the research method, qualitative content analysis, can pose problems in relation to dependability, i.e. repeating the results. Although the research process was documented with care and detail, and the coding system filled with examples, it is possible that another researcher could interpret some of the messages in a different manner, thus leading to different results.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

This study paves the way for future research about integrated reporting and its effects on sustainability communication. They offer many possible paths for future research, for example by repeating this study with different research designs.

Firstly, it would be interesting to study the reasons behind some companies continuing to publish sustainability reports and some companies deleting the sustainability reports completely. The best way to study this could be to interview company representatives and ask why they have come to this decision. This would be important information to know to help direct the integrated reporting practices in the same direction in the future.

Secondly, the same study could be repeated again in five years to determine what kind of changes have happened since. This way the long-term changes that integrated reporting

brings for sustainability communications could be studied. Here, the research method could be the same as in this study, and the study could focus on the same companies for comparison.

Thirdly, this study could be conducted with a different research method, for example by interviewing company representatives. This would unveil what changes the company representatives have noticed themselves, and whether they are in line with these findings.

Fourthly, as this study was conducted on European companies, it would be useful to conduct the same type of study on companies from other continents. This would provide insights to whether similar changes happen across geographical borders, and whether cultural or regulatory aspects have a role in the changes identified.

Lastly, a similar study could be performed on some other section of the corporate reports than executive's messages. This study is limited as the analysis was performed only to the executive's messages in the corporate reports, and no other sections. It would be important to study some other sections of the reports, e.g. strategy or business model sections, to identify whether similar changes can be observed throughout the reports or not.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: European IIRC Pilot Programme companies that are still doing integrated reporting in 2016

Company	Country	Industry
Novo Nordisk	<i>Denmark</i>	<i>pharmaceutical</i>
Flughafen München GmbH	<i>Germany</i>	<i>aviation</i>
EnBW Energie Baden-Württemberg AG	<i>Germany</i>	<i>electric utility</i>
Atlantia S.p.A.	<i>Italy</i>	<i>construction</i>
ASSICURAZIONI Generali Group	<i>Italy</i>	<i>financial services</i>
eni S.p.A	<i>Italy</i>	<i>oil and gas</i>
Terna S.p.A.	<i>Italy</i>	<i>utilities</i>
N.V. Luchthaven Schiphol	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>aviation</i>
AkzoNobel N.V.	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>chemicals</i>
Royal BAM Group	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>construction</i>
Achmea	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>financial services</i>
AEGON N.V.	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>financial services</i>
Rabobank	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>financial services</i>
Ernst & Young Nederland LLP	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>professional services</i>
PriceWaterhouseCoopers N.V.	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>professional services</i>
Randstad Holding N.V	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>professional services</i>
Rosneft	<i>Russia</i>	<i>oil and gas</i>
ROSATOM	<i>Russia</i>	<i>utilities</i>
ENAGAS S.A	<i>Spain</i>	<i>energy</i>
Indra	<i>Spain</i>	<i>information technology</i>
Industria de Diseño Textil S.A. (Inditex)	<i>Spain</i>	<i>retail</i>
Telefónica S.A.	<i>Spain</i>	<i>telecommunications</i>
The Crown Estate	<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>real estate</i>
J Sainsbury Plc	<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>retail</i>
Marks and Spencer Group plc	<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>retail</i>

Appendix 2: Links to the publications used as data material

Novo Nordisk, Annual report 2010:

<https://www.novonordisk.com/content/dam/Denmark/HQ/Commons/documents/Novo-Nordisk-AR-2010-en.pdf>

Novo Nordisk, Integrated report 2015:

<http://www.novonordisk.com/content/dam/Denmark/HQ/Commons/documents/Novo-Nordisk-Annual-Report-2015.PDF>

EnBW, Annual report 2010:

<https://www.enbw.com/media/downloadcenter/annual-reports/annual-report-of-enbw-ag-2010.pdf>

EnBW, Sustainability report 2010:

<https://www.enbw.com/media/downloadcenter/sustainability-reports/sustainability-report-2010.pdf>

EnBW, Integrated report 2015:

https://www.enbw.com/enbw_com/downloadcenter/annual-reports/enbw-report-2015.pdf

Generali, Annual report 2010:

<http://generali2010.message-asp.com/en>

Generali, Sustainability report 2010:

<http://www.generali.com/our-responsibilities/how-we-report/how-we-report-vista.html>

Generali, Integrated report 2015:

<http://www.generali.com/investors/reports-and-presentations/report-archive.html>

Generali, Sustainability report 2015:

<http://www.generali.com/our-responsibilities/how-we-report/how-we-report-vista.html>

BAM, Annual report 2010:

<https://www.bam.com/sites/default/files/domain-606/documents/bam-2010-annual-report-606-14365364071775037238.pdf>

BAM, Sustainability report 2010:

<http://www.bam.com/sites/default/files/domain-606/documents/bam-2010-sustainability-report-606-14364482561141530350.pdf>

BAM, Integrated report 2015:

<http://www.bam.com/sites/default/files/domain-606/documents/bam-integrated-report-2015-606-14574243631680310887.pdf>

Rosneft, Annual report 2010:

https://www.rosneft.com/upload/site1/a_report_2010_eng.pdf

Rosneft, Sustainability report 2010:

https://www.rosneft.com/upload/site2/document_file/8hXhu2BppP.pdf

Rosneft, Integrated report 2015:

https://www.rosneft.com/upload/site2/document_file/a_report_2015_eng1.pdf

Rosneft, Sustainability report 2015:

https://www.rosneft.com/upload/site2/document_file/RN_SR2016_eng_20160929.pdf

Telefónica, Annual report 2010:

https://www.telefonica.com/documents/153952/13347920/telefonica_ia10_eng.pdf

Telefónica, Sustainability report 2010:

https://www.telefonica.com/documents/153952/13347920/telefonica_rc10_eng.pdf

Telefónica, Integrated report 2015:

https://www.telefonica.com/documents/153952/13347920/informe_integrado_2015_en.pdf/6aee51fd-ed01-430c-a7dd-e8342922f97d

Marks and Spencer, Annual report 2010:

http://annualreport2010.marksandspencer.com/downloads/M&S_AR10.pdf

Marks and Spencer, Sustainability 2010:

http://annualreport2010.marksandspencer.com/downloads/M&S_HWDB_2010.pdf

Marks and Spencer, Integrated report 2015:

<http://corporate.marksandspencer.com/investors/153855a7b7b24038920758283d6986fa>

Marks and Spencer, Sustainability report 2015:

<http://corporate.marksandspencer.com/media/6e633a181b124309bab60137c8171017>